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STORIES FOR SUNDAY TELLING

CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY

CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY

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Stories and Rhymes for a ight Stories, For the Children's Hour, For y Teller, Songs of Happiness, Every C d's Folk Songs and Games, Make-at-Home Things for Girls, Make-at-Home T for Boys Montessori ildren

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PREFACE

The stories included in this collection have all been used by Sunday School teachers and mothers for the specific value of bringing home to children of kindergarten and early primary age certain moral and spiritual facts.

Their use has been successful in the lives of the little ones who have loved them.

Each story is written having in mind its apperceptive relation to the life and interests of the average Sunday School child of this age. Each leads in its scope and plot to an important life lesson which children will easily grasp and feel and apply. The stories are very short and can be read out loud or easily told by the teacher or mother.

The collection covers a sufficiently varied field to make the stories useful during the entire period of the children's spir-

itual development during the early years when they learn most simply and permanently through parable, fable and allegory.

CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY.

New York, 1916.

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STORIES FOR SUNDAY TELLING

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THE HAPPY LITTLE PRINCESS

Her name was Felicity, the Princess Felicity, and she had everything in the world to make her happy.

She had a kind king and queen father and mother who always said, yes, to her when they ought, really, to have said, no. She had honey every morning for breakfast and strawberries and cream for supper whenever she wished. She had two or three dozen French dolls and her own special little rose garden with a rustic playhouse and a tinkling fountain. And, oh, the Princess Felicity's dresses! They were as many in number and as beautiful as the colors in the rainbow.

But, strange to say, the little Princess Felicity was not happy.

"My honey isn't sweet," she complained often, or, "How very sour these strawberries are!"

And she neglected her dolls most shamefully because she said that they all looked alike. Once, only fancy, she told her Queen mother that she wanted a dress of a color that is *not* in the rainbow, and because there isn't such a color, and so, of course, she couldn't have the dress, the little Princess Felicity cried until her pretty blue eyes were all red and swollen.

"The Princess Felicity is not happy," said all the court, so the Court Jester tried to make her smile and the Court Musicians tried to make her smile, but it was no use.

Instead of being a happy Princess, Felicity was a sorrowful one.

One day the little Princess Felicity slipped outside of the gate of her rose garden and into the big Outside. She had always wondered what the Outside was like and now she found it very pleas-

ant. There was a little winding, green path that led to a green wood, and on either side of the path were fields where busy farmers were cutting down golden wheat, and small farmhouses where little children played merrily. The Princess walked quite far along the path until she came to a little ragged boy picking blueberries beside the road. He whistled a jolly tune as he worked.

"What makes you so happy, boy?" asked the Princess.

The boy looked up surprised.

"Who wouldn't be happy when blueberries are ripe?" he asked.

"I am picking enough for mother and father and all the children to eat with bread and milk for supper."

"May I help you?" Felicity asked.

"If you like,"—the boy pushed his shining tin pail toward her,—"but don't eat any blueberries," he said. "They're to be shared at home."

So the Princess and the little boy picked blueberries for the boy's family and they had a very pleasant time. Then

the Princess said goodbye, and went a little farther down the road. By and by she came to the edge of the green wood and there she heard a sound:

Tweet, tweet, twitter, tweet.

Oh, it was a little brown bird lying on the ground. The bird's wings were not strong enough for flying. It had fallen out of its nest and was not able to get back.

"Poor baby bird," cried the Princess, kneeling down softly beside the bird so as not to frighten it. Then she lifted it up into its nest in a low bush.

"Now, be happy and sing!" she said, and the bird twittered its thanks as she ran farther on into the woods.

Suddenly she saw a little girl, just her own size, but wearing a poor, gray frock and ragged shoes. She was picking up twigs for her home fire and singing as she worked.

"May I help you?" asked the little Princess, "I never picked up fagots in my life."

"But your dress is too beautiful," the little girl said.

"Oh, never mind," said the little Princess, "I'll be careful," and tucking up her dress she began helping.

It was almost supper time when they finished and tied the twigs into bunches and started home. All the way down the path the little girl in the gray frock told the Princess about how to make little rag dolls and build her own playhouse out in the woods, and many other pleasant things. She promised, too, to visit the Princess soon and play with her.

As the gate to the rose garden opened, the sound of the Princess' laughter and singing reached the palace.

The King, the Queen, the Court Jester—everybody—rushed out. "She is happy!" they shouted.

"What can we do to *keep* you happy?" they asked.

"Nothing at all," said the Princess Felicity, merrily. "I know how to keep happy myself, now."

THE LITTLE BLIND BOY

There was once a little boy whom everybody thought was blind because his eyes were quite closed and he could not walk unless someone took his hand and led him.

One day he went for a little journey with the other children, and one child took one of his hands, and another child took the other hand, and the child who walked before him cried out to whoever they met, "Have a care! A little blind boy is coming."

And the last child who walked behind said:

"Look out! a little blind boy is walking in front!"

They walked on and on for maybe an hour, and then they turned around and came all the way home again. When they reached the house the mother stood waiting at the garden gate with her arms stretched out to greet them.

"Did you have a pleasant journey?"

she asked, and to the first child she said: "What did you see?"

The first child thought for a moment and then he said, "Why, I don't believe that I saw anything, mother, except the window of the baker's shop. It was quite full of sugar tarts."

"Oh," cried the second child, "I saw much more than that; I saw the toy shop with all the little drums hanging outside."

"And I saw a Grandfather-Long-Legs crawling along the sidewalk, and I stepped on him, mother," said the third child.

"Ah!" sighed the mother. "And what did you see?" she asked the last child.

"I didn't see anything, mother," the last child answered. "I looked at my feet all the way, for I didn't want to get my new shoes dusty."

Then the little blind boy spoke, lifting his shut blue eyes up to his mother's face.

"We went as far as the woods," he said, "where the pine trees grow tall and high. I know, for I smelled them. And I heard the wind singing in the branches.

A bird had built her nest in the top of one of the trees. I heard her calling to her babies. It is a pleasant day, mother, for the sun shone warm on my cheeks and on the way we met an angel."

"How did you know that she was an angel?" asked his mother.

"The other children were taking such good care of me," he said, "and wherever we went they called, 'have a care! This is a little blind boy.' Then we met the angel and she said, 'I don't see any little blind boy. He looks as if he saw a great many things, and some day he is going to see everything.' "

The mother laid her soft hands on the little blind boy's shut eyes.

"That must have been an angel," she said. "You do see more than the others, dear, and some day you are truly going to see all."

THE PRINCESS' GOLD SHOES

They were the most beautiful gold shoes that you ever saw and they had been made especially for the little Princess Merry. The skeins of thread that were left and the pattern of the gold cloth of which they were made had been destroyed immediately after the weaver had finished so that there should be no other such gold cloth in the kingdom. The shoemaker who made the pair of gold shoes was obliged to destroy his last and throw away all the tools with which he worked—after being paid a very large price, of course—that by no chance should he make another pair of shoes of the same pattern.

They were finished at last, gold tips, gold buttons, gold tassels and all. One of the very important ladies in waiting carried them on a yellow satin pillow up to the pretty bedchamber of the little Princess Merry and put them on her dainty, pink feet.

"They are said to be magic shoes, your Highness," explained the very important Lady in waiting. "It is said that these gold shoes will carry you into paths of happiness."

The little Princess Merry jumped up and down and clapped her hands and danced into the throne room to show her King father and Queen mother her beautiful new gold shoes, but on the way her little spaniel met her, glad and barking with joy to see her. His paws were dusty from running about in the palace garden and he stepped upon the toes of the Princess Merry's gold shoes, tarnishing them.

"Get down!" cried the Princess Merry quite crossly, and she kicked her little spaniel. Then she went on to the throne room but she found that her new shoes felt very tight and uncomfortable, suddenly.

At the door of the throne room waited the small page who carried the queen mother's train. The little Princess Merry liked the small page boy, for he often

played with her in the garden and carved wooden boats that she could sail in the fountain basin. He stepped forward now to speak to her but she lifted her head very high and looked scornfully at him.

"Don't stop me, boy," she said, "I am on my way to show my gold shoes. Your shoes are only leather." Then she went up to her father and mother, but they sat on their thrones, very busy giving counsel, and had no time to stop and admire the Princess Merry's gold shoes.

"Run out to the garden and play," they told her, but the small page boy did not offer to go with her and she went out sadly. The shoes grew heavier all the way and they seemed to make the heart of the little Princess Merry heavy too.

In the palace garden several unpleasant things happened. The stones of the garden path cut up through the thin soles of the gold shoes and hurt the little Princess Merry's feet. Then her white cat came rubbing and purring up to the

Princess and scratched the golden cloth of the shoes.

"Go away, naughty pussy," said the Princess Merry crossly, and she pushed her little white cat very hard so that she hurt her paw.

"Oh, dear!" sighed the Princess. "My gold shoes are no longer nice. They are dirty and scratched and they pinch," and she sat down on a garden seat and began to cry.

Now it was a rule of the kingdom that the little Princess Merry should never be allowed to cry. As soon as the sound of her loud *boo hoo's* reached the palace everyone came running out to see what was the matter; the King, the Queen, the ladies, the knights and everyone. And when they found it out, they issued a proclamation and the court crier went up and down the streets crying it:

"Oh, dear; oh, dear, what shall we do,
To find the Princess a happy shoe?"

The great shoemakers and the lesser shoemakers came flocking from far and

near with little silver shoes and little silk shoes and little satin shoes of every color of the rainbow, but not one would fit the dainty, pink foot of the Princess Merry.

At last there came the small page who held up the Queen's train and he carried in his hand a pair of stout little leather shoes to offer the Princess Merry. They had nails in the heels and stout tips and thick soles.

"Oh, those will never do for the Princess!" everyone cried, but as soon as the Princess Merry saw them she slipped her feet into them and they felt very comfortable and exactly fitted.

"You can jump in them, and you can run races in them, and you can go for long walks in them," said the small page, and the Princess Merry jumped and ran a little way and walked and she found that it was quite true. Leather shoes were much nicer, even for a Princess, than gold ones.

THE ROAD TO THE CASTLE

No one in the town had ever really seen the castle. They had been told about it by their grandfathers and grandmothers in whispers over the home hearth fires.

"It lies very near this town, within easy walking distance," they said. "You could reach it by going straight to the east if you could find the road. No one lives in the castle, and its gates are wide open, and whoever succeeds in finding it may be the master of the castle."

They also told tales of its wonders. "The gardens bloom with flowers that never fade," they said, "and there are chests full of gold and silver and red rubies and blue sapphires, enough to make all the poor people in this town comfortable always with food and shelter and clothing."

"Oh, if only we might find the road that leads to the castle," they said.

Sometimes they thought that they saw

the castle. In the very early morning when the sun rose and sent long bright shafts of light up through the white clouds, the townspeople would peer out of their upper windows and say:

"See, there are the gold towers of the castle standing above its white marble walls."

And when it was evening and the sun set in bright colors, orange and violet and rose and gold, the townspeople would again watch the sky and whisper to one another:

"We see the gardens of the castle, full of fruit trees and violets and red and yellow roses."

Many people tried every year to find the road that led to the castle. There was a soldier who started out boldly one morning, going toward the east and cutting down with his sword all the little animals of the woods who ran across his path. *He* came running back in a short time, with his sword broken and his eyes full of terror. He said that he had en-

countered wild beasts and had found no road to the castle.

There was the rich man who started out on the same quest because he wished more riches than he already had. He had gone only a mile when a great tree fell and completely blocked his path. *He* came back without finding the road to the castle.

And there were other people who searched for the road; people of importance who wanted to be decorated with badges for finding the castle, people who wished to be called "Master," instead of just "Mr." They always came back with the news that they had been stopped by a prickly hedge or a roaring dragon or something else as troublesome.

Hans was the little boy of the lady who did fine washing for the townspeople. He was a good, kind little boy, but because he spent most of his time carrying baskets of linen and because he had ragged clothes the children of the town did not play with him and he was often very lonely. When he had no baskets of linen

to fetch and carry, he used to take long walks in the wood, alone, making friends of the trees and the birds.

One day he had gone quite far in the woods because he had found many pleasant things to do on the way. He had lifted a very heavy stone that was keeping a little tree from growing straight and tall. He had broken a trap that a cruel person had set to snare the pretty little rabbits. He had lifted the woodchopper's baby over a narrow place in the brook that she might find her father. He had gathered pretty twigs and put them in a pile at the foot of a tree that the thrush might find them for her nest-building. As he went on, he came to a green little path that twisted and turned and went a long way. In following it, Hans was very careful not to step on the earthworms that wriggled happily across it, or the busy ants building their sand houses or the spiders spinning their pretty lace webs. And as he walked carefully along the little green path, Hans suddenly smelled the most delicious perfume.

It was like all the roses and all the violets and all the lilies that he had ever seen crowded into one breath of odor.

"I must find that garden and pick a flower for mother," Hans said, running on. Just around a turn in the path he stopped and his eyes were almost blinded with the brightness and he was dizzy with the sweet perfume. There, in front of Hans, lay the castle, white and gold and big and beautiful. Its gates were wide open and beyond was the wonderful garden full of flowers that would not fade. No one was inside and Hans went in and through the garden, picking his arms full of roses and finding the chests of jewels that were his, now, to give away.

No one could understand how Hans had found the road, but when he came home in the evening with his pockets full of jewels to give to the poor and took his mother back to live with him in the castle, they decided that it must be true.

THE KING'S PAGE

There was once a little boy who wished, very, very much to be a page in the palace of the King. He lived in a tiny house at the foot of a hill and at the tip-top of the hill stood the palace, shining bright in the sun with many sparkling towers and minarets. Once a day the great gates of the castle grounds opened wide and out came the King and all his retinue, riding down the hill and past the little boy's house and on to the woods to hunt.

Oh, but the sight was wonderful! White, and brown, and black horses pranced by, their trappings as bright as gold. The King rode ahead, dressed in his bright hunting costume and followed by all his retainers. There were the little page boys, too, manly and straight, as they walked at the end of the procession in their green velvet doublets and wearing feathers in their caps.

"I want to be a page. I want to be a page. I want to walk behind the King,"

said the little boy every day when the King went by.

And one day came his chance.

"Come with me," said a messenger who waited at the doorway of the little boy's house. "You are needed at the castle."

So the little boy kissed his mother good-bye and climbed up the hill with the messenger. He was quite happy and all the way his joyful heart beat time to the tramp, tramp, tramp of his stout leather shoes. And his heart sang, too.

"I shall see the King's gold throne. I shall eat my supper from a bowl of silver. I shall wear a green velvet cloak and have a feather in my hat," he thought.

But when they came to the top of the hill the little boy felt, as he looked down, that he was a long way from home. He was surprised, too, to see how dark and gloomy the old castle looked. Instead of going straight to the throne room, he was taken through long stone passages to the kitchen, a great, busy room. Here the messenger left him.

"Where is my sword?" the little boy

asked, and the King's cook, laughing, put a wooden ladle in his hand with which he was to stir the soup in the broth pot.

"I want to sit at the foot of the King's throne," begged the little boy; but one of the maids showed him a rough wooden bench with no back where he was to sit and polish the copper pots after the soup was finished.

"Where is my green velvet cloak?" he questioned at last, and at that all the scullery boys in the kitchen laughed and they tied a big, coarse apron on him. "This is your new uniform," they said.

The little boy was not used to crying when things went wrong, so he began to work as hard as he could in the King's kitchen. It was not so bad a place, after all, and always warm and cheerful with the odors of basting fowl, savory sauces and spiced puddings. Every one had something to do every minute of the time and whether it was sweeping or cutting up vegetables, everybody did it very well.

"This is a huge household to feed," said the King's cook, "and it is quite as im-

portant to pare a potato neatly as to wield a sword."

The little boy listened and decided to learn how to be a good little kitchen helper. So he searched the woods and fields for the rare herbs that helped to make the King's broth tasty, and he stirred the broth so hard that it was more perfectly blended than ever before. He sat on his hard wooden bench and polished the copper pots until they caught the sunshine. And he sang at his work like a little brown thrush, all day long. And so, in working, he forgot to wish for a sword, a green velvet cloak and a feather.

After the little boy had been a helper in the King's kitchen for many months, the big door opened one morning. There stood the same messenger who had called for him at his house.

"The King wishes to see the page who sings at his work," said the messenger. "Come." He reached out his hand to the little boy.

"But I am not a page yet, I have not learned to be a page," he said.

"You have been learning here in the kitchen,"—the messenger beckoned to the little boy to follow him. "A boy who can serve a cook can serve a King."

So the little boy was a page and carried a sword and wore a green velvet cloak and had a feather in his cap. And he walked behind the King in the procession.

THE THING OF MOST WORTH

There was once a very important King who was growing quite old and gray. He had three sons, Prince Proud and Prince Charming and Prince Great Heart, all fine, good boys and for that reason it was hard to decide which should wear the crown when the King should not need it any longer.

Prince Proud was very important and he stood up very straight as he held a standard beside his father's throne on days of the council. His eyes were blue and his golden hair was bright and shin-

ing in the sunlight. Prince Proud would make a very good King indeed, the court thought.

Prince Charming was very kind and thoughtful of the happiness and comfort of everyone. Dressed in a red velvet suit and with his brown head held high, he went about the throne room upon the days of the council saying pleasant words to all the lords and ladies. It seemed to everyone that Prince Charming would make a very gracious King.

Prince Great Heart was the youngest and smallest of the three princes and sometimes it seemed to his father, the King, that he was strangely different from his brothers. Prince Great Heart once changed his beautiful blue silk suit for the brown cotton smock of a little plough boy because, as he explained, he wanted to see if the plough boy's clothes would fit him. On the days of the King's council which, everyone knew, were the most important days of all, it was often hard to find Prince Great Heart. He would be off with the little court pages,

or talking to the plough boy, or watching the ways of the brown squirrels and red foxes that lived in the forest about the palace. "Little, wandering Great Heart will not make a King at all," said certain of the court, and at times his father wondered if, after all, they were not right.

One morning at sunrise when the dew was like diamonds on the roses in the palace garden and the towers and battlements glistened with sunshine gold, the King called his sons into his bed chamber.

"I am growing older each day, my Princes," he said, "and less able to rule over my kingdom. I must choose which of you will take my place. To do this I will test you. Do you start out at once, Prince Proud and Prince Charming and Prince Great Heart and, taking with you only your day's food, search the Kingdom for the Thing of Most Worth. What this is you must discover, but whichever of you finds it and brings it to me shall wear my crown and rule in my stead."

So the three Princes started out to find the Thing of Most Worth. They were

all greatly puzzled, for they had not the slightest idea what it would be. Prince Proud searched in the great city which was the capital of the kingdom, for he thought that everything of importance must be stored there.

Prince Charming went to the neighboring castles, for he thought that his friends would tell him how to find the Thing of Most Worth.

But Prince Great Heart went away from the city and away from the court and down to the fields where the little plough boy lived, and no one could tell what he was thinking, for Great Heart's thoughts were very strange.

It was a long and a busy day for the three Princes. When night came they hurried back to the palace where the King waited for them on his great, shining throne. They knelt down at his feet, first, and then he bade them rise.

"Who has brought me the Thing of Most Worth?" the King asked of the three.

"I have," shouted Prince Proud.

"No, I have," smiled Prince Charming.

But little Prince Great Heart did not say a word.

"We shall see," said the King. "Show me." He pointed to Prince Proud who drew from beneath his cloak a gold casket. Opened, the light of a hundred precious stones flashed red and white and violet.

"It is the treasure of the oldest miser in your kingdom," explained Prince Proud. "He instructed me to bring it to you."

The King took the casket of jewels and laid it aside, shaking his head sorrowfully. Then he motioned to Prince Charming.

The Prince came forward and held up a precious bit of filmy lace. It was as soft as a cloud and as fine as a spider's web and as beautiful in pattern as a snow flake.

"One of the Princesses made it with her own hands," Prince Charming said. "She will wear it when she is presented to

you. I could find nothing more valuable."

The King touched the lace gently, but he shook his head again. "What has my little Great Heart brought?" he asked.

"Nothing," said Prince Great Heart, holding out two empty hands. "I had no time to search. I stopped at the plough boy's farm and helped him all day with the ploughing, for his father is sick and furrows must be dug for the wheat." Two tears welled up in Great Heart's eyes.

"Come nearer, Great Heart," said the King. He took Great Heart's little hand in his. In the palm was a hard, rough spot where he had held a plough handle all day.

"Prince Great Heart has brought me the Thing of Most Worth," said the King as he touched the spot tenderly. "He brings to the kingdom the marks of unselfish work."

So Great Heart wore the King's crown and although, at first, it was very large

for him, everyone said that this did not matter in the least for he would soon grow to it.

THE TWO WINDOWS

Once upon a time, in a country far, far away from here, there were two windows. One looked out on the village street, for it was a cottage window, and one looked over the sea and the plains, for it was a tower window.

One day a painter came to that country, and he walked through the village street and up, up the hills, until he came to the tower. He wanted to find a high place where he could set his easel and see the plains and the sea and the sunrise and the sunset, and paint a more beautiful picture than any that he had ever painted before. So he climbed the tower stairs and he looked out from the tower window.

Yes, it was a very wonderful picture that he saw. The other hills lay all green and gold before his eyes, and the sea

sparkled blue as a turquoise. But what was that? Way, way off in the valley, so far away that he could not paint it, was a spot of bright gold color. Then it changed to rose and then to amethyst. Never in all his life had the painter seen such a pretty bit of color. He must go nearer to it. He must see what lay all about it.

He strapped his easel over his back and started down toward the valley and the wonderful bit of color. It was a long, long way, but he kept on, never tiring, and always with the patch of color in front of him.

Presently it led him into the village and then down the village street. Then he found it. It was the little cottage window with the sunset reflected in its polished panes.

As the painter stopped before the little window that shone so bright and gay he peered inside. It was all quite poor, but so neat and tidy! In a corner of the cottage room a little, little girl was rocking a baby to sleep, and singing softly

as she swayed to and fro in a little, old red chair.

"I have found the prettiest picture in the world," said the painter, and he took out his brushes and his colors and began to paint.

WHAT THE LILY NEEDED

There was once a child who planted a hard, brown bulb in the earth of her garden early in the spring. It was tightly covered by its tough, dark coat and it was very ugly and plain to look at.

"Will it grow to be a beautiful flower?" asked the little girl of the old gardener who gave her the hard, brown bulb.

"It will grow to be a pink lily if the rain and the sun and something else help it," the old gardener told her.

"What else?" asked the child who was very curious indeed about things.

"I'll not tell you. You shall find out for yourself," said the old gardener and

he left the child wondering very much indeed.

So the child made a soft, dark bed for the lily bulb in the garden, very early, almost before the winter was quite over. She spread the earth softly over it and then she looked up at the sky and she called:

"Oh, raindrops, fall quickly, that my bulb may burst its tough, dark coat and grow to be a pink lily." But the raindrops would not fall.

So the child called to the clouds and said, "Oh, clouds, lie low and gray that the raindrops may fall and my bulb burst its tough, dark coat and grow to be a pink lily." But the raindrops would not fall.

So the child called to the round, gold sun that was beginning to shine very high in the sky, now, and she said to the sun:

"Oh, sun, shine brightly. Then please hide your face that the clouds may lie low and gray and the raindrops may fall and my bulb may burst its tough, dark coat and grow to be a pink lily."

So the sun shone very brightly and

melted the snow and warmed the earth bed where the bulb lay, asleep. Then the round, gold sun hid its face and the clouds lay low and gray, and down came a whole shower of pattering raindrops. But, although the little girl knelt down in the garden path and looked and listened, the lily bulb did not burst its tough, dark coat and grow to be a pink lily.

And the child took her little garden shovel and loosened the ground all about the earthy bed of the bulb and she said:

"Oh, creeping, clinging root weeds, don't twine around the hard, brown bulb and keep it from bursting its tough, dark coat and growing to be a pink lily."

Then, because she saw the green leaves of the weed. pushing their early way up through the earth, she called to an old black beetle who was walking up and down in the garden sunning himself, and she said:

"Old black beetle, cut the creeping, clinging root weeds that they may not twine about the hard, brown bulb and

keep it from bursting its tough, dark coat and growing to be a pink lily."

So the old beetle went cheerfully down, down under the ground and cut the creeping, clinging roots of the weeds that might twine about the hard, brown bulb and keep it from growing to be a pink lily.

But still the bulb did not burst its dark, tough coat.

So the child only waited. She wanted, oh, very much indeed, to dig deep down in the earth and see exactly how the hard brown bulb looked, but she decided not to do that. Instead, she worked a little, helping her mother, every day and she played a little with her dolls every day and she sang a little every day and *every* day she went out to the garden to see if the hard, brown bulb were bursting its tough, dark coat and to give it a drink of water.

One day when she went out to the garden she found that a wonderful thing had happened. Two straight, green leaf arms had pushed themselves up through

the garden to greet her. Between them they held a beautiful lily, pink and large and sweet smelling.

"Beautiful lily," cried the child, "what did you need to help you grow besides the sunshine and the rain?"

And the lily breathed softly to the child, "Your patience."

THE GUEST

Some children wanted to have a party so they tidied their playroom, and they washed their faces and hands and they put on their best white dresses. Then they set out all their nicest toys; the doll who came from France; the storybook that had many colored pictures; the train that would really go, and the stone building blocks. They made ready a tea table, too, spread with a clean white napkin for a tablecloth and set with the best little china teaset. There were jam sandwiches on the table and apples and a big pitcher of milk.

When the table was ready, the children wondered and wondered who they should invite to their party, and at last they decided to ask a rich child who lived next door, and the Mayor's little girl who lived at the end of the street, and the little boy whose father kept the candy shop. So they wrote letters in their best handwriting to all these children, inviting them to the party. They ran and left the letters at their front doors and then they waited and waited for the guests to come.

At last it was time for the party, but no guests came. Then it was past time for the party and the rich child's mother rang the telephone bell and said that the child could not come because she was invited to another party. Then there came a note from the Mayor's little girl saying that she was very busy having a new frock tried on and, of course, could not come. The children waited and waited for the little boy whose father kept the candy shop but he did not come either, and neither did he write to say why.

"Is it not a pity?" said the children.

"No one but ourselves can enjoy this beautiful party," and they looked all about them at the clean playroom and the best toys set out and the tea table with its feast.

Just as they spoke there was a tiny knock at the door—such a faint knock it was that at first they did not hear it. But when it came again, they opened the door and they saw a little stranger child outside. He wore very old, tattered clothes but his face was sweet and kind and he smiled as he saw the playroom.

"May I come to your party?" the stranger child asked very prettily and softly.

"Oh, yes, indeed," cried the children. "We asked some other children, but we shall like to have you, just as well," they exclaimed.

Then one child brought the train to show the stranger child how it would steam along quite alone. Another showed him the colored picture book, and the third drew his chair up to the table and poured him a cup of milk. He seemed

very hungry indeed, and he was so grateful. He ate nearly all the feast except one apple, and then he said he must go because he had a long way to walk home.

He went out so softly that they did not know that he was gone, but they talked among themselves afterward, saying that it had been the nicest party that they had ever known. Before they brushed the crumbs from the table they divided among themselves the apple which was left. It surprised them very much. It was quite the sweetest apple that they had ever tasted.

When they asked their mother about the stranger child she said she had not seen him come into the house nor had she seen him go out either. She said that perhaps it had been the new little boy who came from the washerwoman's house, but she was not sure.

THE SHADOW POSY

Once upon a time there was a posy—a little, sweet, pink and white posy it was—and it grew in a garden where there were a great many other flowers.

There were roses and great lilies and azaleas and crimson poppies in the garden. They were wonderfully tinted, and they filled the garden beds and lined the garden paths and bent their heads as they made bows to the children who romped and played in the garden every day.

But the little pink and white posy grew down low, very close to the ground, and it was quite covered up by the shadows—shadows of grasses and leaves, and cloud shadows, and shadows of the other great flowers. No one could ever see the sweet pink face of the shadow posy.

Sometimes the shadow posy felt badly because it was hidden away and no one could ever see it. All the flowers want to grow very beautiful and then be

picked. The roses and the lilies and the azaleas and the poppies were picked every single day, but no one ever saw the pink and white posy hidden there in the shadows.

After a while the posy grew used to living all alone, and never being picked, and it just tried to stand up as straight as it could, and grow as pink as possible. It did grow to be a lovely posy even if it was so very tiny. Its face was the color of a sunrise cloud, and a rose petal, and a baby's cheek, all mixed together. It drank up the dew, and smiled at any stray beam of sunshine, and forgot about its loneliness, because it was so busy being happy.

Then, one day, something happened. The child with the closed eyes came out to the garden. Some people called him the blind child, but they did not know. He could feel the sun, and find a smile by just passing his soft hands over his mother's face. He was not blind at all. He could really see very well.

Today he wanted a flower. He was

quite fond of flowers, and when he came out to the garden, the flowers almost followed him. They bent across his path, and lifted their faces up to his, begging to be picked. Slowly he walked along the path, and as she heard his feet, the shadow posy lifted her face too, but she knew that the child would not see her.

Softly he touched the roses and the poppies, but not one did he pick. Then he suddenly knelt down in the path and felt eagerly about in the grass. His fingers touched the shadow posy. Oh, it was wonderful for her! He picked her. He held her close to his face as if he loved her.

"How did you find me?" the little shadow posy breathed.

"Why, you could not hide from me," said the child with the closed eyes. "I found you because of your perfume. You are so very sweet."

So the shadow posy knew that nothing in the world could hide a flower if it only tried to grow and send out its sweetness. And she was not lonely any more.

THE SEED

There was once a wee brown seed that fell to the ground in the fall, and it was very cold and lonely, so it cried aloud in the tiny voice that only a seed has, and only old Mother Nature has ears which are sharp enough to hear: "O kind Mother Nature! Please send me a blanket to cover my cold little head until the spring comes and I begin to grow."

Mother Nature answered the wee brown seed in her cheery voice that sounded like singing brooks and twittering birds and chirping crickets and breeze lullabies: "O wee brown seed, I must ask the tree for a blanket!"

So Mother Nature called to the tree and said: "Old tree, will you give me one of your leaves to make a blanket for a wee brown seed?"

But the tree sighed and moaned in answer: "Mother Nature, you must ask Jack Frost to paint my leaves scarlet be-

fore I can give you one to be a blanket for a wee brown seed."

So Mother Nature called to Jack Frost and said: "Jack Frost, will you paint the leaves scarlet that the old tree may give me one to make a blanket for a wee brown seed?"

Then Jack Frost answered Mother Nature and he said: "I will paint the leaves scarlet if North Wind will blow them down from the old tree."

So Mother Nature called to North Wind, and she said: "North Wind, will you blow very hard, if Jack Frost paints the leaves scarlet, that the old tree may give me a blanket for a wee brown seed?"

"That I will!" roared North Wind so loudly that Jack Frost heard him.

Jack Frost got out his finest paint brush and he painted all the leaves on the tree a very pretty scarlet, but one was a brighter color and prettier than all the rest. As soon as Jack Frost had finished the painting, North Wind stripped the leaf from the tree, although the old tree

was sorry indeed to let her prettiest leaf fall to the ground.

But the scarlet leaf was happy. It floated and danced for awhile in the arms of North Wind, and then it fluttered down to cover the wee brown seed like a blanket, keeping the seed's little head warm until the cold winter was over and the spring came again.

THE LITTLE GOLD APPLE

It hung just above the swing on a branch of the old apple tree in the orchard. If he stood on his tip toes in the swing seat, Jasper could reach it with his chubby fingers. He had watched it all summer long, first a great, pinky-white bloom, then a funny baby apple as green as the grass at his feet, and now a big, dusky-red apple; and it was Jasper's very own apple.

Grandfather had cut a fine letter J. from white paper and one day when the sun shone strong and yellow upon the

orchard, Jasper climbed up in the swing seat and fastened the J. with two pins, to the green cheek of the apple.

Today, he was going to take the letter off.

Carefully he climbed into the swing, holding to the rope with one hand and reaching high with the other as he took one—two pins out, and then the letter fell to the ground. Oh, such a wonder! There on the smooth skin of the apple shone a great, green letter J. Jasper picked his very own apple and sat down in the swing holding it happily in his clasped hands.

There were so many delightful things to do with one's very own little apple. Grandfather could cut the ruddy skin carefully, until it hung in one long, beautiful curl, and Jasper could swing it three times around his head and toss it upon the floor to see if it lay in the form of an M. That would mean that Jasper was Mother's little lover.

Then he could cut the apple in two

white half-balls and tell his fortune by the seeds.

Or he might hang it by a string above the fireplace some evening, while Grandfather piled on logs and the beautiful apple roasted and sputtered and dripped sweet juice into the silver spoon which Jasper held.

Yes, they would roast the apple.

But, hark, what was that?

"Please, may I have an apple?"

Jasper turned. There, on the other side of the orchard wall, stood a beggar child. His clothes were torn and poor, his face was wistful, and the hand he stretched across the wall was very, very thin.

"I want an apple. Please give me an apple."

Jasper looked at his very own apple. Then he went slowly over to the orchard wall.

How strange! Was it the setting sun that turned the little apple to gold as Jasper laid it in the hand of the beggar child?

THE ROAD UP THE HILL

"You are to carry a message for the Duke to his brother, the King, who lives at the top of the hill," said the Knight in charge of the pages to Gervaine.

"I don't want to climb that hill! It is as high as a mountain," said little Gervaine.

"But the Duke has given his orders and you must obey," said the Knight, handing the letter with its huge red seal to Gervaine.

So Gervaine begged a basket of lunch of the castle cook and pulled his cape tightly about his shoulders, for it was a cold day. Then he went out the castle gate and started in the direction of the King's palace whose turrets shone so brightly in the sunshine at the top of the high, high hill.

Indeed it was a high hill. Tall trees like great giants stood on either side of the road and there were boulders in the path that looked like crouching trolls.

The pebbles were hard beneath Gervaine's feet and at every step the road grew steeper.

"I shall never, never reach the top," he complained. "My feet are sore already and my back aches." But just then he saw a little striped chipmunk running along in the path ahead of him. The chipmunk had a little wild plum in his paws and because he was afraid that Gervaine was the kind of boy who would chase him and try to hurt him, he made great haste and dropped his wild plum. It rolled to the side of the road and he went on without it.

"Wait a minute, Master Chipmunk! Here is your plum. Oh, please do not run so fast!" called Gervaine. But the faster Gervaine ran and the more loudly he called, the faster did the chipmunk run. Over the hard stones, past brambles and briers, on and on they went. At last the chipmunk's little legs were tired and he crawled into a hole at the foot of a tree looking out at Gervaine with two wee, black eyes.

"You wild, shy little thing," laughed Gervaine. "I couldn't hurt you if I wished because I am the King's page and can hurt no dumb beast. See, here is your plum." He laid it down a safe distance from the tree and watched as the chipmunk came cautiously out and picked it up. Then Gervaine looked up.

He was *one-quarter* of the long way up the hill!

Just beyond a bend in the road where there was a flat place and a herd boy pastured his goats, Gervaine heard a cry. The flock was gone, but caught in the bushes was a little kid. It had lost its way; it could not find its mother.

Gervaine took the frightened little creature in his arms and covered it over with his coat, for it was growing late in the day and the woods were chill with frost.

"Don't cry," said Gervaine, "perhaps your mother is just a little way ahead and waiting for you. I know she is, for here are the foot-prints of the flock in the ground."

It was as pleasant as the game of follow-my-leader that Gervaine and the other little pages played in the castle courtyard, to follow the footprints of the flock. Soon, Gervaine overtook them. There at the end straggled the mother goat, longing for her little one. Gervaine set down the happy kid.

Oh, he was now *half-way* up the hill!

The goat herd was a little boy of Gervaine's age.

"Will you walk a way with me?" he asked. "I can show you where the gentian grows, but we will not pick it for then it would not bloom so prettily next year."

So Gervaine walked beside the goat herd and they sat down to rest beside the beautiful blue gentian and Gervaine gave almost all of his luncheon to the little herd's boy who had not eaten since morning. He had been picking up fagots for his mother's fire and the bundle was very heavy.

"I will carry your fagots for you,"

Gervaine said, slinging them across his back.

He carried them as far as the little brown hut where the herd's boy lived and had a drink of warm, sweet goat's milk. Then he started on alone.

He was *three-quarters* of the way up the hill!

"I am afraid of the dark! I don't dare go home," he heard a voice say.

Gervaine started and listened. It was a little girl, such a beautiful little girl, her long, brown braids caught back with gold bands and her embroidered silk gown torn by the bushes and dragged in the dirt.

"Who are you?" asked Gervaine.

"I am Rosamond who lives at the top of the hill," the child sobbed. "I followed a butterfly out of the garden when no one saw me. It flew up to the sky and now I cannot find my way back."

"Come with me," said Gervaine, taking her hand and hurrying on. "I am not afraid. See, the evening star is up and there are lights just ahead of us."

Oh, they had reached the *top* of the hill!

There was great excitement at the palace gate. A shout arose as the two, Gervaine and Rosamond, entered.

"Here is the little lost Rosamond, our Princess Rosamond."

The King himself came out, and smiled at Gervaine as he read the letter.

"One of my most faithful pages whom I send to you to be your squire," it read.

"And you brought my little strayed daughter safely home! Was it a long climb up the hill, my lad?" asked the King.

"No, your Majesty. It was very short," answered Gervaine.

THE BAMBINO

It was raining in Florence and the stone baby was crying, keeping the raindrops company as the tears trickled down his worn little stone cheeks. He had stood for so many years over the big door

of the children's hospital, and he had seen so many little children carried in and out through the door. But he could never go anywhere and no one ever spoke to him. Winter and summer and through storm and sunshine he must stand there, a little, lonely, stone bambino, with his arms outstretched and his fat little legs wrapped tightly in swaddling bands.

No wonder the stone baby was crying. He could see the children playing down in the square, but he must stand on the top of the building and never go down. He could hear the choristers singing in the great cathedral across the way, but he did not know how to sing. Why, the tears just poured out of his big stone eyes, until he heard a little sound behind him on the roof top.

"Twitter, tweet, sweet! Mother, I really believe the stone baby is crying."

Two little brown birds flew close to the bambino, singing in spite of the rain.

"Why, so he is, father!" The mother sparrow could scarcely twitter because

her mouth was so full of straws. "See how his arms are spread out."

It had occurred to both of these little brown birds at the same time.

"He wants something to hold," they sang. "We will build our nest just inside the hollow of his fat little arm."

Wasn't the stone baby interested as he watched the weaving of the nest which he was to hold—he, who had been such a lonely bambino for so many years! That must have been what he had been waiting for all the time—a sparrow's nest to hold.

Presently the nest was done and then came the eggs and—wonder of wonders, the baby sparrows! The stone baby was so busy holding his live treasures that he forgot to cry when it rained. Then the little birds flew away, but the mother and father came again another spring and made the old nest over new.

"I'm the happiest bambino in the world," said the stone baby, tightly clutching his nest, "if I am a hundred years old."

THE SOLDIER WHO LIVED IN THE DRUM

It was a fine little red drum with leather straps and pine drumsticks. The fairy godmother said when she gave it to the little boy, "Here is a new drum for you, Billy. Don't beat it too hard or leave it outdoors in the rain, because it is a magic drum. There's a little soldier who lives inside."

Then the fairy godmother wrapped her gray cloak about her and disappeared without waiting to explain—after the fashion of most fairy godmothers.

Billy looked for his fairy godmother. Then he looked at the little red drum and he shook it to see if the soldier would rattle around inside. He did not rattle one bit, so Billy decided that for once in her life his fairy godmother had made a mistake. And he slung the drum about his neck and went gaily up the street, beating a merry rub-a-dub-dub as he went.

He had not gone very far when he met a great big cow with great big crumpled horns. She was right in front of Billy in the road, walking with her head down as if she were a cross cow. Now Billy had always been afraid of cows. He decided to turn around and run home, but just as he was going to do it, he heard a wee, wee little voice.

The voice seemed to come from inside the drum, and it said, "Don't be a coward, Billy. That cow is more afraid of you than you are of her. Walk by her like a brave little man."

So Billy stood up like a man and walked right by the cow and she never seemed to see him at all.

Then he went on a bit farther and he saw ever so many big boys tormenting a little kitten. They were tying papers to her feet and pulling her tail. Billy was sorry for the kitten, but he was afraid of so many boys. He decided to pass them by, but he heard the wee, wee little voice again, inside the drum.

"Tell those boys to let the kitten go, Billy."

"Let that kitten go, boys!" called Billy in a brave, loud voice.

The boys had not seen Billy coming and when they heard the rat-tat of his drum they dropped the poor little kitten and it ran away, safe and happy.

Then it was twilight and Billy started home. On the way he saw all the shadows going home, too, walking beside him on the edges of the road. Billy was afraid and he wanted to cry.

"Don't cry, Billy!"

It was the same wee, wee voice inside the drum.

"Play a tune on the top of my head and march along bravely. Those shadows won't hurt you."

So Billy marched bravely home, playing rub-a-dub-dub all the way.

He never saw the little soldier inside the drum, but he often heard him, and he helped Billy to be brave.

Maybe there's a little soldier inside every little red drum. Who knows?

THE LITTLE RED HOUSE WITH NO DOORS

There was once upon a time a little boy who was tired of all his toys and tired of all his picture books and tired of all his play.

"What shall I do?" he asked his dear mother. And his dear mother who always knew beautiful things for little boys to do said:

"You shall go on a journey and find a little red house with no doors and with a star inside."

Then the little boy's eyes grew big with wonder. "Which way shall I go?" he asked, "to find a little red house with no doors and a star inside?"

"Down the lane and past the farmer's house and over the hill," said his dear mother. "Come back as soon as you can and tell me all about your journey."

So the little boy put on his hat and his jacket and started out.

He had not walked very far down the

lane when he came to a merry little girl dancing along in the sunshine. Her cheeks were like pink blossom petals and she was singing like a robin.

"Do you know where I shall find a little red house with no doors and a star inside?" the little boy asked her.

The little girl laughed. "Ask my father, the farmer," she said. "Perhaps he knows."

So the little boy went on until he came to the great brown barn where the farmer kept barrels of fat potatoes and baskets of yellow pears and heaps of yellow squashes and gold pumpkins. The farmer himself stood in the doorway looking out over the green pastures and yellow grain fields.

"Do you know where I shall find a little red house with no doors and a star inside?" asked the little boy of the farmer.

The farmer laughed, too. "I've lived a great many years and I never saw one," he chuckled, "but ask the Granny who lives at the foot of the hill. She knows how to make arrow-root taffy and pop-

corn balls and red mittens. Perhaps she can direct you."

So the little boy went on farther still until he came to the Granny sitting in her pretty garden of herbs and marigolds. She was as wrinkled as a walnut and as smiling as the sunshine.

"Please, dear Granny," asked the little boy, "where shall I find a little red house with no doors and a star inside?"

The Granny was knitting a red mitten and when she heard the little boy's question, she laughed so cheerily that her wool ball rolled out of her lap and down to the little pebbly path.

"I should like to find that little house myself," she chuckled. "It would be warm when the frosty nights come and the starlight would be prettier than a candle. But ask the wind who blows about so much and listens at all the chimneys. Perhaps the wind can direct you."

So the little boy took off his hat politely to the Granny and went on up the hill rather sorrowfully. He wondered if his dear mother who usually knew almost

everything that was to be known, had perhaps made a mistake.

The wind was coming down the hill as the little boy climbed up. As they met, the wind turned about and went along, singing, beside the little boy. It whistled in his ear and pushed him and dropped a pretty leaf into his hands to show what a good comrade it was.

"Oh, Wind," asked the little boy after they had gone along together quite a way, "can you help me to find a little red house with no doors and a star inside?"

The wind cannot speak in our words, but it went singing on ahead of the little boy until it came to an orchard. There it climbed up in an apple tree and shook the branches. When the little boy caught up, there, at his feet, lay a great, rosy apple.

The little boy picked up the apple. It was as much as his two hands could hold. It was as red as the sun had been able to paint it and the thick brown stem stood up as straight as a chimney. It was a little red house in which the apple

blossom fairy had gone to sleep. It had no windows.

"I wonder," thought the little boy. He took his jack knife from his pocket and cut the apple through the center. Oh, how wonderful! There, inside the apple, lay a star holding brown seeds.

So the little boy called to the wind a "Thank you," and the wind whistled back, "You're welcome."

Then the little boy ran home to his mother and gave her the apple.

"It is too wonderful to eat without looking at the star, is it not?" he asked.

"Yes, indeed," answered his dear mother.

THE TINKLING, SINGING MUSIC BOX

Once upon a time there was a little tinkling, singing music box that stood in a place of honor upon the counter of the toy shop. It had a beautiful, shiny, polished wood case, but *that* was not the

wonderful part of the little tinkling, singing music box. It had a beautiful colored picture upon the front of a tiny blue lake and a tiny white castle set in the midst of some green trees, but *that* was not the wonderful part of the little tinkling, singing music box. It had a crank with a gilt knob which one could turn around and around and then around again, but *that* was not the wonderful part of the little tinkling, singing music box.

The wonderful part of the little tinkling, singing music box was its voice. It had a voice as soft as wind in the tree tops and as high as a summer cloud and as clear as a singing brook and as sweet as a bird's. It could sing many pretty little tunes, too, for the children. There was one very fine marching tune that it sang in which one could hear the feet of toy soldiers. And there was the best tune of all that the little tinkling, singing music box always sang the very last of all—Home Sweet Home.

There was a little boy named Dick who wanted very much to go to the toy

shop, so when he woke up in the morning he cried loudly for fear his dear mother would not take him. Then he spilled his breakfast porridge, making large, untidy spots upon the clean white tablecloth and upon his clean white blouse. He had to have his blouse changed and then he cried again. After that he forgot to feed his good little dog, Dandy, because he was in such haste to go to the toy shop. On the way to the toy shop he passed the house of a little friend who was ill. The window was open and the friend called out:

"Where are you going, Dick?"

"I am going to the toy shop," Dick called back.

"Will you buy me something?" asked the friend who was ill.

"No indeed," Dick called back, "I am going to the toy shop to buy a toy for myself."

So Dick reached the toy shop and first he looked at a hobby horse with a bushy mane and tail, but he did not want that because he had one at home; and next he

looked at a game that was made up of a great many colored bits, but he did not want that because he decided that it would be too hard to put together. And then he looked at a pop-gun, but he did not want that because he had three at home. Last, he looked at the little tinkling, singing music box that stood in a place of honor on the toy man's counter and he clapped his hands and shouted in great glee, "Oh, I want that music box. That is what I came to buy."

So Dick turned the crank of the music box around and around and then around again. It sang for him very prettily the fine marching tune with the sounds of the tramping feet of many little toy soldiers. Then oh, it was very strange, the little tinkling, singing music box made a sound as if it had a cold in its throat. It stopped singing altogether. Although the toy man shook it and tried his hand at turning the crank, the music box was perfectly quiet.

So Dick had to go home without it, because it would not sing for him.

There was a little girl by the name of Helen who wanted, too, one morning to go to the toy shop. So she got up early and dressed herself without waiting to help mother dress the dear baby as she did every other morning. Then she helped herself to the toast without waiting to say, "If you please," for fear she would not be in time for the toy shop. After breakfast she stamped her foot when she was asked to wipe the plates and dust the playroom. And on the way to the toy shop she pushed a little errand girl rudely off the sidewalk because she was in such a hurry.

So Helen, too, reached the toy shop and first she looked at a doll in pink satin who would open and close its eyes, but she did not want that because she had one at home. And next she looked at tin pots and pans for a doll's stove, but she did not want those because she did not like to cook. And then she looked at a sewing basket, but she did not want that because she was not patient enough to sew. Last, she looked at the

little tinkling, singing music box that stood in a place of honor on the counter of the toy shop and she jumped up and down and laughed, "I will buy that music box. That is the toy that I came to buy."

So Helen turned the crank of the music box around and around and then around again. It sang very prettily the fine marching tune with the sounds of the tramping feet of many little toy soldiers. Then it sang the dancing tune in which one could hear the tripping feet of dolls. Then, oh, it was very strange, the little tinkling, singing music box made a noise as if it were sneezing. It stopped singing altogether. Helen turned the crank around and around and then around again, but the music box stayed perfectly quiet.

"It's very strange about that music box," said the toy man. And Helen had to go home without it because it would not sing for her.

Molly, the little errand girl, had been looking in the window of the toy shop.

All day Molly carried big boxes from the shop to the houses. In the boxes were bright flowers and pretty ribbons and lovely lace, but Molly's dress was torn and her coat was thin. When her work was over, she went home and helped her mother get supper for the baby and the little lame brother and then wash the dishes and put the baby and the little lame brother to bed. She had never been in a toy shop.

"Come in," called the toy man, "you may look about."

So Molly went inside the toy shop, walking wonderingly about. First she looked at a baby doll with a long white dress and she wanted it very much because she had no baby doll. And next she looked at dolls' dishes and she wanted them very much for she had no dolls' dishes. But last she looked at the little tinkling, singing music box that stood in a place of honor on the counter of the toy shop.

"Oh, I want a music box very, *very* much," Molly said.

"You may have it," said the toy man putting the music box into Molly's hands. "It is broken, though," he told her. "It will not play."

Molly turned the crank of the music box around and around, and then around again. First it played the fine marching tune and then it played the dainty dancing tune. *Then,* without a coughing noise or a sneezing noise and without stopping, it went right on and sang the best tune of all—Home Sweet Home.

"That is very queer," said the toy man as Molly went out with the little tinkling, singing music box, but it was not queer in the least.

There was a reason why.

SNOW SHOVELS FOR TWO

There were two, strong, straight little snow shovels just the right size for two, strong, straight little boys. They were bound with shining bands of iron, and their handles had been beautifully curved

by the joiner to make them fit well in a child's hand. One little snow shovel was painted a pretty, soft green and the other little snow shovel was painted a pretty, bright red. They hung, side by side, in a store until Peter and John saw them and shouted and said, both together:

"Oh, I want one of those snow shovels!"

So Peter's father bought him the little green snow shovel. And John's father bought him the little red snow shovel. Peter and John proudly carried the snow shovels home on their shoulders to their two houses that stood side by side. As Peter went in his gate he looked up at the gray sky and said:

"Oh, I *wish* it would snow!" And as John went in *his* gate, he, too, looked up at the sky and said:

"Oh, I *wish* it would snow!"

Then it was a long, cold, dark, blowy night and when it was morning and the red sun bobbed up from behind the hill, something wonderful had happened. Instead of being a brown earth it was a white earth. There had been a snow

storm in the night and the banks of beautiful starry snow flakes were piled as high as Peter's and John's window sills and fences.

Peter jumped out of bed, and dressed, oh, very quickly. He ate his breakfast porridge very quickly, too.

"It will be a splendid day to play with my new snow shovel," he said. Soon, all bundled in his fur-lined coat and his cap with earlaps and his red mittens, Peter was out of doors, ready to play with his little green snow shovel.

Peter made a large snow man in the garden. He wore one of Peter's own cast-off hats and he held Peter's little broken air gun and he had a broad piece of red flannel tied around his neck for a tippet. His eyes were coals and his mouth was made of a row of cranberries and his nose was a piece of an icicle.

But when the snow man was all finished, he seemed to frown at Peter and Peter was just a little wee bit afraid of him.

He went away down to the end of the

wood lot to build himself a snow fort, and made a great many snow bricks, digging the soft snow and patting it into shape with his snow shovel. Then he put the bricks together to make the walls of his snow fort and when it was finished he stood bravely inside, with his snow shovel held very straight for a sword, waiting for the enemy.

But it wasn't any fun at all because there was no one to play at being the enemy. Presently Peter went into the house.

"It's too cold to shovel snow," he said. "I wish I had a new game instead of this new shovel."

John hopped out of bed just the same time that Peter did. "A fine day to work," he said, as he looked out of the window. He, too, dressed very quickly, but before he ate his breakfast, he put on his fur-lined coat and his cap with the ear laps and his red mittens and he shovelled the back steps clear of snow so that the milk-man could reach the door more easily. That was not all he did, either.

He shovelled a clean, broad path from the back steps to the barn so that Tabby, the old pussy who slept in the barn in the warm hay, could walk up to the kitchen for her breakfast without wetting her paws.

When this was finished, John ate his own breakfast and, oh, how good it tasted.

After he had finished breakfast, he shouldered his red snow shovel and went out the front door and down the front walk and out through the front gate. He called to Peter as he went by, but Peter was too busy playing to notice or answer, so John went right on down to the place he had started for—old Mrs. Maloney's.

Mrs. Maloney was very wrinkled and very smiling and very kind. She sold butter and eggs to Peter's mother and John's mother and she brought them herself to their houses. She often tucked in some ginger cookies for Peter and John. But Mrs. Maloney was lame.

John shovelled a path from Mrs. Maloney's back door to her hen house and from her front door to her gate and from

her back door again to her woodshed. He brought in her wood and coal and fed her hens and then he went home.

"Are you cold, John?" asked his mother.

"Not a bit," laughed John. "And oh, how glad I am that I have this little red snow shovel!"

THE LITTLE SOLDIER

There were once two little boys and each wished, oh, so very, very much, to be a soldier! It was a soldier's day, the sun was up, and from every house a red, white and blue flag was flying. Soon, the soldiers would march by in their gay-colored uniforms with the fifes playing pretty tunes and the drums beating time for the soldiers' feet. The two little boys sat upon their own doorsteps and talked together across the fence about it all, for they were both very much excited.

"I shall be as fine a soldier as any of

them," said the first little boy, whose name was Bobby.

"I shall put on my soldier's cap with the gold cockade and my fringed epaulets and my new red drum," he went on. "As soon as I hear the parade, I shall follow at the end and everyone will see me."

"Oh, there it comes—"

There was the sound of pretty music at the end of the street.

"We must hurry, Tommy," said Bobby. "You put on your cap and your epaulets and bring your drum, too."

So the two little boys put on their soldier caps, their fringed epaulets and brought their little red drums, and they hurried off to join the parade.

Bobby could run the faster so he soon outstripped Tommy, whose feet were short and fat and got in his way a great deal. Soon Bobby had reached the end of the parade, but Tommy, left behind, nearly tumbled over a silky-eared dog who lay, crying in the road.

"Pretty little dog! What's the matter?" asked Tommy, stopping and lifting

the silky-eared doggie up in his arms. Then he saw the dog's poor little paw had been broken, and quite crushed by some heavy cart wheel. So Tommy sat down on the curbing and bound the hurt paw with his own handkerchief and stroked the silky ears and whispered pretty, comforting words in them. Presently he got up, still holding the doggie in his arms, and he started home, for it was quite too late now for him to follow the parade. Even the drums sounded far away.

"I can't be a soldier today. I can't be a soldier at all," said Tommy to himself, and one big, salt tear splashed down to the sidewalk.

"Why not?"

Tommy stopped suddenly and looked up right into the eyes of a real soldier in a long blue cape. The soldier had dropped out of the parade and was going home.

"You are a soldier," the real soldier said. "Look!"

He opened his cape and showed

Tommy a shining gold star that he wore upon his coat.

"That is my decoration," he said. "They gave it to me because once I carried a wounded friend just as you are, now. It was harder than fighting, my lad."

"Didn't you fight in any battle, or march in any parade?"

"Not that day," said the real soldier.

"And do you really think I can be a soldier?" Tommy asked again.

"You are a soldier," answered the real soldier again, stroking the doggie's soft brown head.

THE LITTLE RED WAGON

The little red wagon stood among many other beautiful, strong toys in the toy shop. It was made of the polished wood of a straight old forest tree. It had four strong wheels made by the same wheelwright who made the huge wheels for the wagons drawn by horses. It had

gilt lettering on one side that said, "Express," which meant that the little wagon could go very fast. All the rest of it was painted red.

Two little boys, William and Walter, often came to the toy shop to look over the toys. They were neighbors. Among all the velocipedes and hobby horses and games and trains of cars in the toy shop they liked the little red express wagon the best of all.

"I wish that my mother would buy me that express wagon," longed William. And, "I wish *my* mother would buy *me* that express wagon," said Walter.

The toyman wondered, too.

"To which little boy, William or Walter, shall I be asked to send the little red wagon?" he thought.

One day William's mother said to him, "I shall make a fine white cake today. Will you go to the grocery store for me and bring home three pounds of sugar and a pound of raisins and a pound of butter?"

"Pretty soon," said William and then

he fetched his new top down from his playroom and had such a good time spinning it on the garden walk that he forgot all about going to the grocery store.

And the very same day Walter's mother said to him, "I shall make a batch of currant buns today. Will you go to the grocery store for me and bring home ten cents' worth of cinnamon and a pound of currants and three pounds of sugar?"

"I'll go right away," said Walter.

It was a sunny day and very pleasant for playing. On the way to the grocery store, Walter passed William at play in his garden.

"Come in and I will let you spin my top," called William.

"I can't, I am doing an errand for my mother," Walter answered.

Although he met another boy whom he knew and who invited him to ride his velocipede, and a little girl offered to let him roll her hoop, Walter did not stop. He went straight to the grocery store and bought all the things that his mother needed for the currant buns; ten cents'

worth of cinnamon and a pound of currants and three pounds of sugar. They filled Walter's arms very full, but he did not drop a single package.

Then it was time to help the gardener to get ready for the spring.

"Rake up all the small sticks and stones and dried leaves from the old flower beds and put them in a pile back of the woodshed," William's father said. "We will want to sow the flower seeds soon."

So William raked the small sticks and stones into small piles and then started to carry each small pile as far as the woodshed, but he soon stopped. An early butterfly fluttered down through the warm air and William ran about the garden, racing with it.

Just about this time Walter's father said to him, "We must make the garden neat and tidy for the spring. At the back of the barn there is a heap of smooth white gravel. Take your little shovel and spread the gravel on the gar-

den paths to fill in the holes that the rain has washed away."

So Walter filled his little shovel many times with the smooth white gravel. Each time he carried the shovel very carefully to the holes in the path that the rain had washed away and he filled in each one neatly. Often the little round gravel stones spilled and so Walter was obliged to pick them up and fill his shovel again. Over the fence William called, "Come and try my new Indian bow and arrows, Walter," but Walter called back, "When I finish filling up these holes, William."

And presently the garden walks were as smooth and neat as anyone could wish paths to be.

There was a circus parade the next day. Dressed in their best trousers and clean blouses, William and Walter were to go together to see the elephants walking along in pairs and to hear the steam piano. As they went through William's gate, his little sister called, "Please,

William, take me with you to see the circus parade."

"You must stay at home," William said. "Your legs are so short that you will not be able to keep up with us. We are going to walk very fast indeed to the street where the parade passes."

The little sister began to cry, but Walter reached down and wiped her eyes with his clean handkerchief.

"You may ride pick-a-back with me to the circus parade," he said.

So Walter took William's little sister upon his back and she put her arms around his neck and played that he was a galloping horse. They went very fast indeed to the circus parade and saw not only the elephants and heard the steam piano, but they saw the trained dogs and the gilt chariots.

And after all this had happened, the little red wagon that had been waiting so long in the toy shop had a tag tied upon its handle because it was sold and was going to be delivered at the house of a little boy. The toyman smiled as he

put the handle into the fingers of his messenger.

"Hurry as fast as you can," he urged the messenger. "There is a little boy who needs this express wagon very much."

So the messenger left the little red wagon at Walter's door just in time for Walter's birthday. It was to be his own express wagon for fetching parcels from the store and drawing dirt and stones in the garden and for carrying little children whose legs were very short, and for playing when all these things were done.

THE BROOK THAT HELPED

Leonard took off his shoes and stockings and stepped into the clear, cool little brook that ran down through Grandfather's farm land. It was a long, happy vacation day and Leonard was to spend a great many such days with his dear Grandfather and Grandmother on their wide, wonderful farm.

Although school was over for Leonard,

he found everyone working on the farm. Grandmother, a pretty blue and white apron covering her pretty pink and white calico dress, was very busy making juicy cherry pies. Grandfather in his brown overalls and jumper was overseeing the first haying. Even Leonard's animal friends, Brownie, the collie dog, and Tiger, the big striped pussy, had their own special work. Brownie was down in the sheep pasture looking after the lambs, and Tiger was out in the barn watching a rat hole.

"What are you going to do today, little man?" Grandfather had asked Leonard directly after breakfast.

"Oh, I don't know; play, I suppose," Leonard had answered.

Grandfather had smiled. "There are chickens to feed and eggs to gather and a bag of corn meal is waiting at the mill to be brought home to Grandmother," he had said.

But Leonard, if he heard, did not reply. Here he was wading in the merry little brook and basking in the sunshine.

The water rippling over the stones sang a happy song and it seemed to Leonard as he idly dropped leaf boats into the water that the day was meant for fun—not work.

But where was that last, big maple leaf sailing, Leonard suddenly wondered. It floated along as if asking him to follow and the brook flowing swiftly along seemed to call too. Leonard stepped from stone to stone until he came to a place where the willow trees touched their branches over the water and the brook itself stopped to form a little, still round pool where a great many wild birds could stop and drink. Leonard stepped out of the water and watched very quietly from behind a tree. Here, a chickadee flew down for a long, comforting drink and then sang his thanks to the kind little brook. A squirrel drank, too. "How would these thirsty wild creatures live without the brook that stopped long enough in its tumbling way to care for the birds and animals?" Leonard thought.

He ran along the bank a little farther.

The brook flowed on beyond the still pool and as it went it bathed the roots of tall beautiful ferns and washed the faces of flowers that dipped down into its cool waters. As it flowed, it grew wider and swifter and stronger. Its fast running waters hurried on with a louder, rushing sound as if it were able to say, "Follow me, follow me. Don't stop to play. I am too deep now for a little boy to wade in and I am bound for greater work than carrying toy boats."

Leonard followed the brook, running along the bank and scarcely able to keep up with its rushing course. Suddenly he heard a sound of whirling wheels and he looked up. He had almost run into the open door of Grandfather's mill. And here was the brook, too, rushing in a mighty stream over the mill wheels and turning them round and round without stopping. The brook was hard at work helping to grind Grandfather's corn, for the wheels turned the great hopper inside the mill from out of which came the yellow corn meal.

There in the doorway, stood the fat bag of corn meal that Grandfather had asked Leonard to bring home to Grandmother. Part of it, he knew, was to be made into corn-meal muffins for supper and part was to be mixed with water for the baby chickens' dinner. Leonard sat down on a big stone and pulled his stockings out of his pocket, putting them on. Then he put on his shoes that had been tied around his neck. Last, he shouldered the bag of corn meal and started merrily back toward the farm with it.

Grandmother was delighted to see him. She had finished baking the cherry pie and there, cooling on the kitchen window ledge, was a little cherry pie made in a saucer and having strips across to show the cherries through. It was for Leonard's dinner.

The egg basket hung at the kitchen door, empty. Leonard took it off its nail and hurried down to the barn. He found many round, white eggs waiting in the hens' nest in the hay and he filled his basket. Oh, such a surprise as waited for

him! The little bantam hen had laid a tiny egg and this Leonard could have for his own breakfast.

Back to the house he went, carrying his eggs so very carefully. Grandmother met him, a bowl of corn-meal mush in her hand.

"I'll feed the chickens. Please let me," begged Leonard, taking the bowl from Grandmother's hand and starting for the chicken yard. He was very busy and very happy, too, singing as merrily as did the brook on its way, for both Leonard and the brook knew how pleasant it is to be useful.

THE LITTLE BROWN PATH

It was a queer, crooked, winding little path and it lay quite near the house, only the two little boys who lived in the house had never seen it until this special day. It was just wide enough for a little boy to walk in, and it was so overgrown with grass and moss and bushes that one had

to look very sharp indeed in order not to lose it. Perhaps that is why the little boys had never seen it—because it was almost hidden.

They were wondering what they would do with themselves very early on this sunny morning, when Bobby said, "O Robin, see! Here's a new little path. Where do you suppose it leads to?"

"Let's go along it and find out," said Robin, but they soon saw that the path was only just wide enough for one little boy, so they measured two grasses with their eyes shut, and as Bobby's grass was the longer of the two, he started out alone in the little brown path to see where it ended.

Bobby walked as fast as he could, with his head high up in the air and his hands in his pockets. He was so anxious to reach the end of the path that he forgot to look at anything he was passing. There were ever so many interesting things in the path—a little gray field mouse, and a ground-sparrow's nest, and a great, golden butterfly perched on a

clover blossom, but Bobby never saw one. Pretty soon the path ended in a brier bush which scratched Bobby's face, so he turned back again and came home along the path.

"It's a stupid old path," he said to Robin, rubbing his scratched face. "There's nothing to see in it. I wouldn't go if I were you."

Robin decided that he wanted to explore the little brown path, though, so he started down it, but oh, so carefully, and looking down at the ground all the way. Presently he came to the field mouse that had caught her long, gray tail in a mat of grasses. Robin pulled away the grasses and set her free and there, underneath where the grasses had been hiding it, was a wonderful bit of crystal as clear as a diamond, and shining in the sunlight with all the colors of the rainbow.

Robin put the crystal in his pocket and he went along the little brown path, until he came to the ground-sparrow's nest. There he saw her pinky-brown eggs.

Then he watched the gold butterfly that fluttered ahead of him in the path, and led him to the very end. The brier bush was there, but it opened wide to let Robin through. The butterfly hovered over a pretty pink rose that grew on the other side of the brier bush.

Now Robin knew that his mother loved pink roses almost as much as she loved Bobby and him, so he picked it. Then he went gaily back along the little brown path, holding the pink rose high in his hands, and there was Bobby waiting for him.

"Oh, it is the nicest path, Bobby!" said Robin.

THE HOUSE IN THE GARDEN WALL

"The roof is so strong that no rain will leak through," said Molly.

"And I don't believe the storms could reach it in this snug little corner," added Polly.

The two little friends who looked so much alike and played together so much and who had braids just the same length —Molly's yellow and Polly's brown— bent over the old dolls' house. It was too nice a day to play indoors. The little new green leaves on the lilac bush seemed to be clapping their hands at the spring song the breezes sang. The sun was warm, and yellow dandelions shone like stars in the grass. Molly and Polly had brought down the old dolls' house from Molly's attic and set it on top of a tree stump in a sheltered corner of the garden wall.

"We will take out all the old furniture and make new beds and chairs and tables out of twigs," Molly said.

"We will rip up the old carpets and wash the floors and weave new carpets out of grasses," said Polly.

"And we will plant morning-glory seeds all around the foot of this tree stump to make a little garden for the dolls," said Molly.

"When everything is ready, we will

bring out the china doll family and show them their new summer home," said Polly.

It was such a happy play. Molly and Polly made the old dolls' house very clean and they painted the outside red and the inside green. With soft, slim willow twigs from the trees that grew beside the brook, they twisted little chairs and couches and tables for the house. They gathered long grasses that grew in the daisy fields and braided them and then sewed the braid with green thread to make rugs for the rooms. They planted morning-glory seeds at the foot of the tree stump on which the house stood and they made chains of pine needles and hung them in front of the house for curtains.

Then, when they were quite ready to bring the china dolls out and show them the house, something happened.

Molly had the measles.

And something else happened.

Polly had the measles.

It was days and days before Molly and Polly could go out in the garden again.

When they were quite well, and could put on their pink and blue gingham dresses and their sun hats with pink and blue streamers and run out doors, they shouted in happiness.

"It's summer, Polly," said Molly.

"The daisies are out, Molly," said Polly.

"Let us go and see our dolls' house in the corner of the garden wall," said both little girls at once.

Oh, how beautiful it was! The morning-glory seeds had sent up long, twining vines that reached to the little red walls of the dolls' house. All over the vines hung blue and pink and white morning-glory bells. The little girls ran up close to the dolls' house. They pushed aside the pine-needle curtains. They peeped inside.

Chirp, chirp, chirp! Out popped a little bird head in a blue cap and in a second the little bird man, himself, in blue clothes and a red-brown vest flew out of the dolls' house. He lighted on the

garden wall and twittered at the strange little girls who had disturbed him.

"It's my house now. It's my house now," little Master Bluebird seemed to be singing.

Inside the dolls' house there was a great commotion. In the parlor where a nest of sticks and grasses lay on the dolls' rug, the little Mistress Bluebird chirped and scolded at the little girls who peeped in at her. Four baby Bluebirds tumbled out of the nest and fluttered unsteadily about. They were too young to fly and almost too young to walk. They perched about on the dolls' chairs.

"It's really their house now," said Molly. "I am so glad that we painted and furnished it in time for them."

"We'll go away very quietly and not come too near them after this," said Polly. "Isn't it ever so much nicer to have a live family in a dolls' house than a china family?"

The Bluebird family thought just the same thing. They raised their family in the dolls' house and even after the baby

birds had flown away to find a nesting place of their own, little Master and Mistress Bluebird would come back at sunset to sit in the door of the dolls' house and sing their goodnight song to their two little friends, Molly and Polly.

THE CITY CHILD AND THE COUNTRY CHILD

There was once a child who had lived all her life long in the city where there were toy shops and many other little children and parks and shops and people to wait upon her and amuse her all the time. Then she went to the country to visit her dear grandmother for a long, long time. The country she found to be very different from the city. There were no toy shops or many other little children or parks or shops or people to wait upon and amuse her all the time. Instead, there were long roads and deep woods and flowers and flying things and creep-

ing crawling things and much to do to amuse oneself.

But, oh, the city child could not find these things.

One day she stood at her grandmother-dear's garden gate feeling very lonesome and very sorrowful. And just then another little girl came singing down the road. She was a happy country child in a blue gingham frock and with bare, brown feet.

She stopped in front of the little city child.

"What makes you frown so?" she asked.

"Oh! I don't know what to do," said the little city child. "If I were at home I would get out my big, big dolls' house and play, but one can't play house here."

"Oh! but you can play house here," laughed the little country child. "Come with me and I will show you how."

So the country child took the city child's hand and they went together down the road and a little farther until they came to a pretty, green place in the

woods where there was an old hollow tree stump.

"This will be the house for our dolls," explained the little country child.

Then she showed the little city child how to gather pine needles and lay them inside the tree stump for a carpet and how to make chains of other pine needles to hang in front for a curtain to the house. They piled smooth stones inside for a cupboard and on these shelves they set acorn teapots and tea cups and saucers.

"Where are our dolls?" asked the little city child.

"Oh, here they are," said the little country child bringing some nuts which still had on their round green coats. She found long straight branches that had branching twigs at the sides for arms and these, stuck into the nuts, made very good dolls' bodies. They dressed these nut dolls in leaves and played with them all morning.

"It is much nicer than my dolls' house in the city," said the little child. "Will

you play with me again tomorrow, please?" and the country child said that she would.

So when the next morning came the little city child waited at her grandmother's gate for the little country child. As soon as she saw her bare, brown feet pattering along in the road, she said:

"I wish that I were at home today. I would dress up in my necklace and my pretty frock with lace on the edge and I would have a party."

"We will dress up and have a party here," laughed the country child. And she took the city child's hand and they hurried to a pretty field nearby where wild flowers grew.

The country child showed the city child how to make long necklaces and crowns of daisies. These they wore. And soon they fastened Queen Anne's lace in double rows to the edge of their frocks and to the edges of their sleeves. Oh, they were beautifully dressed for a party. Then they went home to the grandmother-dear

and she gave them a party feast of ginger cookies and milk.

"It is the nicest party I ever knew," said the little city child. "And what shall we play tomorrow?"

"I don't think I shall have time to play," said the little country child. "I must work tomorrow."

"Oh, how stupid!" sighed the little city child. "I don't like to work."

But when the next day came, the little city child went out of her grandmother-dear's gate and down the road until she came to the tiny red farm house where the little country child lived. The little country child wore a big apron. "I am making cake," she said, "and I will let you beat the eggs."

So the little city child beat the eggs until they were as light as foam, and then they mixed snowy flour and yellow cream, and golden butter to make the cake. When it was baked and iced with thick, white frosting, they climbed up into the hay loft to look for eggs, and after that they fed the chickens and picked black-

berries and, last of all, they sat on the doorstep of the tiny red farm house and sewed pretty red and white patch-work squares.

"Don't you *love* to work?" asked the country child.

"I just *love* to work!" answered the city child. And she added, "Isn't the country a great deal nicer than the city?"

THE FIRST DAY OF VACATION

It was the first day of the long, sunshiny vacation time. Everybody, everything was happy. Up in the orchard the fat robin, the gay oriole and the slim little wren sang merrily. The sun found every corner of the gardens and fields and painted them gold for the happy children's play. The toyman had dressed his windows with dolls in summer dresses and little flowered china tea sets and red rubber balls and silvery tin trumpets and shining toy swords.

"*All* the children will play *all* the time," said the toyman.

And that is just what Harold thought too.

"Vacation is begun. Now, for play!" shouted Harold. Then he put on his Indian suit with the beautiful fringed leggings and the head-dress with the long, trailing feathers and a wampum belt and a bead necklace. He took his Indian bow and arrows and he drew a chalk target on the back fence. There was nothing so much fun as to play Indian in vacation time, Harold decided.

He fitted an arrow into the bow; he pulled the string. Whiz! Over the back fence went the arrow and a long, long way beyond. Harold fitted another arrow into his bow—a third. Whiz! Whiz! Neither of the arrows hit the target. Over the fence they flew. Dropping in his haste his Indian head-dress with the long trailing feathers, Harold ran after the arrows, but they had gone too far for him to find them. On the way back, he tore his beautiful fringed leggings.

When he reached home he found that his joyous little yellow puppy had run away with his head dress and had quite chewed up the long, trailing feathers.

"I will be a soldier instead of an Indian," Harold decided, so he marched up and down the street wearing a paper soldier cap and beating a little red drum, but he pounded it so hard with his drumsticks that he broke the top and that was the end of the soldier play.

Then Harold went down to the brook to sail his boat, a long way, but he did not fasten the string tightly enough and the boat sailed farther than he meant that it should. It sailed out of his sight.

And it was the same way with Harold's rubber ball which bounded into the well and his kite which stuck itself high up in the apple tree and his jack stones which lost themselves in the long, thick grass of the lawn.

Jimmy began his first day of vacation at just the same time as Harold did. He had ever so much to do so he didn't put on his Indian suit first. He fetched his

bottle of paste and his scissors and some white paper and a rubber eraser and all his school books with their torn and thumb-marked pages. He sat on the big cool piazza floor and mended and cleaned his school books so that they could begin the long vacation feeling just a little better than if they had to be put away looking untidy. As he finished, his mother called:

"The baby's crying, Jimmy! Do come and amuse him."

Wasn't it splendid that Jimmy *could,* having just finished his books? He cleared a place on the big, cool piazza floor and built block houses until the baby laughed and crowed and clapped his hands. It was fun for Jimmy, too. He built walled moats and turrets and drawbridges and towers and dungeons for the block castles. He was a soldier who stormed the castle, or a prisoner who looked out from a tower window. Oh, it was quite as much fun for Jimmy as it was for the baby.

Then Jimmy went to the store to get a

quart of molasses. It was to be made into ginger cookies, so why shouldn't a boy be glad to walk half a mile to the store and back carrying a heavy stone jug. And after that the radishes needed weeding and the nasturtiums had to be watered. The sun was very warm in the garden, but Jimmy didn't mind that. Why, it gave him a chance to wear the new, just-like-a-farmer's straw hat which his mother had let him buy at the store. And the garden was so near the kitchen that Jimmy could smell the spicy ginger cookies as they baked.

When Jimmy had finished the garden and had eaten four or five hot cookies and drunk a high glass of cool milk, he put on his Indian suit and called across the fence to Harold:

"Let's play war dance, Harold."

Harold sat, hunched up, on his back doorstep doing nothing.

"Oh, I don't want to play," Harold said. "I've been playing all day and I'm tired. It's been a *long* day, hasn't it, Jimmy?"

"No, sir," Jimmy answered, doing a few Indian brave steps because he was happy. "I think it has been a very short day."

THE PUSSY WILLOW BASKET

"The pussy willows must be out," Grandmother said, looking from her window across the garden and the field in the direction of the brook. "How I wish I could see them. I remember, Peter, that your Grandfather, when he was a little boy, always cut me a willow whistle in the spring. I wish my old feet would take me as far as the brook so I could see the pussy willows." Grandmother gave a little sigh as she looked back at her knitting again.

Peter stood by the window. He was looking out, too, his hands in his pockets and a frown on his forehead. It was Saturday, but such an unpleasant holiday—with a cold wind blowing and the snow half melted, making mud in the road.

Grandmother's voice, though, made him turn, and listen, and smile. It had put an idea into his head. His jack-knife was in his pocket and his high rubber boots stood out in the hall. Peter knew where the willow trees, like a line of tall ladies in white gowns, stood at the edge of the brook. He would go and see if the pussies were really out, and if they were he would bring a bunch of them home to Grandmother.

By the time that Peter had pulled on his boots and wound his red tippet about his neck the sun had come out, bright and warm. When he had followed the road and then the cow path through the lots until he came to the brook, he found the pussy willows, like little gray kittens wearing brown caps. They seemed to climb up and down the branches, their furry coats glistening in the sun.

Peter cut one, two, three, many of the long, willow boughs. How soft and easy they were to bend. Then he wound them in and out with his fingers, tying them with strips of bark and making a little

basket all covered over with the pretty pussies. He twisted a little handle and fastened it in place. What a pretty little basket, and it had been so easy to make!

Peter started slowly back looking with sharp eyes at the edge of the road for some wild flowers with which to fill it. Nothing but mud and a few patches of green grass here and there; not a single flower was out. Peter carried the little willow basket carefully in his hands. He was sorry that it was empty.

Mew, Mew.

What was that?

Peter stopped and looked down on the ground. Such a forlorn, tiny scrap of a gray kitten as he saw, curled up in a furry ball by the edge of the road. It must have run away from its mother and its tiny legs were too weak to carry it home again.

Mew, mew, oh! how pitifully it cried.

"Poor pussy!" Peter lifted the forlorn little cat up in his arms.

Why, the kitten was so tiny that it fitted, by a little squeezing, in the pussy

willow basket, filling it to the very brim, its little tail and its two bits of ears sticking over the edge. There never was such a spring basket, of that Peter was quite sure, and he ran all the way home to give it to Grandmother.

Grandmother put on her spectacles to look at the pussy willow basket. Then she saw the little kitten inside. First she smiled, and then she laughed until two tears trickled down her pink cheeks.

"Is it as nice as the willow whistles that Grandfather used to make for you?" asked Peter anxiously. "Do you like the pussy willow basket?"

"I like it very much, Peter," Grandmother answered, smoothing the kitten's fur, "I shall keep my ball of wool in it when I knit, and now we will take the little kitten for a drink of warm milk. I always did love pussies."

And dear Grandmother smiled again.

THE STORY OF THE CANDY STICK

There was once a field full of waving green and yellow and purple stalks of sugar cane and as the wind blew through, rustling and bending it, there came across the field the song of busy workers:

"Sugar cane, sugar cane, good to eat,
Give us your stalks so thick and sweet."

And the sugar cane gave its sweet stalks gladly. They were cut down and taken to the sugar mill where the miller started his great iron rollers turning, and put the stalks between saying:

"Sugar cane, sugar cane, good to eat,
Give of your juice, now, clear and sweet."

From between the rollers the juice of the sugar cane trickled down and was poured into great copper kettles which were set bubbling and boiling over a great fire. The flames hissed and sput-

tered and lapped the kettles. They seemed to say:

"Sugar juice, sugar juice, good to eat,
Boil now to sugar so rich and sweet."

And the juices of the sugar cane boiled and boiled until they turned into a thick, sticky mass of sweet stuff, and this was poured out to cool. Part of it was luscious brown molasses and part of it was brown sugar, but as it cooled the molasses dripped through holes in the coolers and the sugar stayed in the great, sweet mass behind. This brown sugar had to be whitened with charcoal and boiled again. And now the song of the sugar cane was this:

"Brown sugar, brown sugar, good to eat,
Bleach now to white sugar, pure and sweet."

The clear, white sugar was poured into molds and there it hardened. When it was quite cool and waiting in great, white blocks, it was put into a whirling machine

whose sharp blades cut it as fine as grains of sand. As the machine whirled and whizzed, its wheels seemed to say:

"Block sugar, block sugar, good to eat,
Grind, now, to fine sugar, white and sweet."

Then the sugar was packed in strong, wooden barrels and went, some to the grocer, but most of it to the candy man who poured it into his candy kettles and kindled his fires, singing as he worked:

"Sugar fine, sugar fine, good to eat,
Boil now to candy dough, soft and sweet."

The candy man had two kettles of boiling sugar. One of these was white, but into the other he put fruit juices which made it a bright, beautiful red color, and drops of peppermint extract which made it smell most delicious. When the candy dough in both kettles was thick enough to mold, the candy man poured it out, the red on one big marble table and the white on another big marble table. Then

he kneaded it until he was able to pull it out in long, ropelike strings.

Hanging to the wall of his shining candy kitchen were big, polished hooks. The candy man took a lump of white candy dough in one hand and a lump of red candy dough in the other hand. He pulled these out into long ropes and threw them over a brass hook, pulling and twisting them until they were a long, red-and-white rope of candy. As he pulled and twisted he sang:

"Sugar dough, sugar dough, good to eat,
Twist in a candy stick, red and sweet."

And he laid the long red-and-white stick down again on his table, cut it into shorter sticks with sharp scissors and packed red-and-white candy sticks in big boxes for the children's Christmas.

In the house hung a row of empty stockings before the chimney. Into each the mother put the Christmas toys and on top of the toys, sticking out of each stocking, was a red-and-white candy stick.

And when the children ate their candy,

the mother told them the whole, long story of the red-and-white candy sticks.

"Sugar cane, sugar juice,
White sugar, sweet,
These make the candy sticks
Little folks eat."

THE DOLL WHO WAS SISTER TO A PRINCESS

She wore a pink silk dress and blue satin boots and a string of coral beads. Her face was like a real child's and her blue eyes would open and close and she would say, "Mamma," when she was squeezed.

"I'm sorry to say good-by to you, but of course you are going to a palace to live as your sister did," said the toyman, wrapping her up in tissue paper and tying her with pink ribbons. Then he spoke to the messenger of Santa Claus who had come for her:

"Don't leave her in any home but a royal one because she won't be happy."

"Now, how can I know?" asked Santa Claus' messenger.

"Oh, that's very simple," answered the toyman. "She will know her mother, the queen, and speak to her when she sees her."

So the messenger of Santa Claus tucked the doll under his arm and started out to find a palace for her.

"Of course it must be a very large house and very beautifully furnished," thought the messenger as he hurried through the snowy streets. It was Christmas Eve and he wished the doll to be safe with her queen mother in her own home on Christmas Day.

On and on they went, by markets where the Christmas turkeys were starting out, and by the bake shops where the Christmas cakes were being baked, and by the candy shops where the Christmas goodies were being packed. And in a little while they came to a huge house. Its chimneys reached high toward the sky and it was all made of stone and it had two shining lamps at the gate.

"This must be your home," said the messenger of Santa Claus to the doll under his arm. "Peep in the window and see if your queen mother is there."

So they peeped in the window and they saw a beautiful room with pictures on the wall and a great many other dolls lying about on the floor. One doll had no hair, and one had but one leg, and one had but one arm, and one, oh, it was very sad, had a dirty face! In a gold bed in one corner of the room was the little girl who owned the dolls, fast asleep.

"Is that your queen mother?" asked the messenger of Santa Claus of the doll who was sister to a princess. But the doll did not say a word, and the messenger knew that he had made a mistake in the palace.

So they went on and on, by the little grocery boys with their Christmas baskets, and the little florist boys with their Christmas flowers, and the big express boys with their Christmas trees, and they came to a middle-sized house.

"Probably this is your home," said the

messenger. "It has smaller windows and lower chimneys, but it might do."

So they went softly up the front walk and peeped in the window. Oh, was there ever so wonderful a Christmas tree? From the top to the bottom sparkled gold stars and silver chains and candy apples and glass balls of every color of the rainbow—red and blue and green and rose-color and violet. Underneath the tree were laid picture books and toy dishes and a toy stove. Seated in the center of the tree was a doll in a ruffled dress and yellow curls, reaching her arms out to be taken.

"Is this your palace?" asked the messenger.

But the doll who was sister to a princess did not say one word, so the messenger knew that this was not the right palace either.

Then the messenger of Santa Claus wrapped his overcoat warmly around the doll, and they went on and on until they came to a place where there were no Christmas turkeys or Christmas cakes or

Christmas goodies or Christmas baskets or Christmas flowers or Christmas trees. The streets were narrow and the houses were very tiny.

"We mustn't stay long in this part of town," said the messenger of Santa Claus to the doll. "This is no place for a princess." But as he spoke, it seemed to him that the doll's little heart went pit-a-pat against his heart and as if her little blue satin boots wriggled with excitement.

"Why, I really believe that you want to look in this window," said the messenger, stopping in front of the very tiniest of all the very tiny houses. He took the doll to the dim little window and let her look in. Candlelight and a small fire and not any warm rugs and part of a bread-and-milk supper left on the table, they saw.

A little girl was rocking a dear baby to sleep, and when his eyes were fast shut she put him in his cradle and kissed him and hung his worn-at-the-toes little socks by the side of the chimney. Then the doll's little heart really and truly went

pit-a-pat, and her little blue satin boots really kicked and kicked because she wanted to go in the house, and as the messenger held her closely she said as plainly as you or I could say it, "Mamma."

So the messenger knew that the doll who was sister to a princess had found her queen mother and he was very much surprised. But he rapped on the little brown door of the house and left the doll there in her tissue paper wrappings and pink ribbons.

"There's no accounting for the tastes of a princess," he said as he started back to the toyshop through the snow. He didn't understand, though, that the doll had found the only palace in the whole city.

THE WONDER GIFT

All the children were greatly excited. This was the letter that the Teacher read to them the week before Christmas.

"I will give a prize of five dollars to

the child who brings the most beautiful gift for the orphans' box. It must be a good gift, as well as beautiful."

It was like the dear parson to help the Sunday-School children with their Christmas giving. Every year, on Christmas Eve, a great box stood in the Sunday-School room. One by one, in the sweet Christmas twilight, the little ones tiptoed in and dropped into it their Christmas gifts that were to be sent away to the orphan babies. The babies would have no gifts if the children did not remember them. Of course it was a happy thing to do, but, oh! there were so many other happy things to be done on Christmas Eve. To run through the starlit, snowy streets and peer at the great turkeys and ruby cranberries that hung in the markets and peer through the toyshop windows at drums and trumpets and gay picture-books; to hang one's stocking; to listen at the chimney for even a breath from Santa Claus—ah, these were pleasanter than to tuck away in a box a gift that one would like to keep.

But to win a prize!

In little groups at play and at home the children talked over the most wonderful gift.

"It will be mine!" said Gretchen. "My grandmother has knitted a pair of beautiful red mittens to put in the orphans' box. No other child will have so fine a gift."

"No, it will be my gift that wins the prize," said Edgar. "I have made a dolls' bed with my scroll saw. It is a better bed than one can buy in a toyshop."

"My gift will be much better than any of these," said Dorothy. "It is a warm cap for one of the little orphan girls and my mother paid ever so much money for it."

So the children compared and boasted, —all save Little Brother, who had no gift about which to boast.

Little Brother's father swept the church and tended the church yard and paths and rang the church bell. At home there were Big Sister and Middle Sister and Little Sister and Big Brother and

Middle-sized Brother, besides Little Brother. There was only bread and butter for them all—no jam. There was only money enough for coats and boots, no gifts. What could Little Brother put in the Christmas box?

And soon it was Christmas Eve. In laughing, chattering groups the children tiptoed into the Sunday-School room, so sweetly fragrant with greens, and dropped their gifts into the box. Such a full box—dolls, and packages of sweets and games and Gretchen's grandmother's red mittens and the little bed that Edgar's jig-saw had made and the warm cap that Dorothy's mother had bought.

"Tomorrow I will win the prize!" said each child, as he or she left a gift.

Then Little Brother stole in. He carried a bundle under his arm and as he laid it on the top of the box one little round tear rolled down Little Brother's cheek. Then he ran out of the room and all the way home he whistled very loudly so that no one would think that he had been crying.

When it came Christmas morning the children gathered in the church for the dear Parson to tell them the Christmas story. When the carols were sung and the story told, the dear Parson stepped down into the children's midst, holding something in his kind, wrinkled hands. It was an old fairy book with the gold worn off the covers and the pages loose, but with many beautiful pictures still. All the story-people lived inside, bold Jack the Giant Killer and lovely Cinderella and gay Red Riding Hood.

"Some child loved this book," began the dear Parson, "and because he loved it so much, he gave it away. This is the best gift that I found in the box; it is going to win a prize. Who gave away his fairy book?"

And Little Brother stood up in his place.

THE CHRISTMAS OF THE LITTLE RICH CHILD

She was one of the richest little girls in the whole world. Her home had almost as many rooms and almost as much gold furniture and almost as shining silver as any castle in any story-book. And as for the little rich girl's toys! Oh, surely there was never any princess in any story-book who had as many toys as she!

There were her dolls—talking dolls and walking dolls, laughing dolls and crying dolls, and dolls dressed as babies, and dolls dressed as young ladies—so many of them that it was never possible for the little rich child to undress them at night or dress them in the morning. There were her dolls' houses, so many and so large that she never could keep house in them satisfactorily; before she finished making the beds in the first one it was time to get tea in the last one.

That was how it was with everything.

She had too many picture-books and quite a confusion of games; she could never wear out her pretty frocks and dainty ribbons because she had so many. And having so many toys and frocks and ribbons seemed to make her sorrowful instead of glad. Her sweet little face was often clouded with frowns.

Then it came to be Christmas time.

"What shall we give Constance to make her happy?" wondered all the friends and relations of the little rich child, and each decided to buy her a more beautiful gift than they had ever bought her before.

So the little rich child's grandmother bought her a little gold ring with a tiny, flashing little diamond in it. And the little rich child's father bought her a little automobile. And the little rich child's mother bought her a new set of furniture for her room with festoons of pink roses hand-painted on it. And the little rich child's father gave her another bank book. And all the other relatives and friends gave her larger dolls and more expensive

dolls' houses and more beautifully bound books.

The little rich child looked at all her gifts on Christmas morning and she thanked all her relatives and friends for being so kind to her, but she was not really and truly happy. And after a while when the grown-ups were having their naps upstairs and the servants were having their tea downstairs, the little rich child put on her coat and hood and went out of the house and down the street.

She walked a long way until there were no automobiles because the streets were too narrow for them to pass, and there were no large houses like hers because the tall, poor houses took up all the space. But in all the windows and in all the doorways and all along the street were happy children, laughing with joy over their Christmas gifts. The little rich child wondered about this because they were such small, poor gifts. One child had only one tiny doll, and one had only a ball, and another had no gift at

all. He sat on a doorstep, holding close under his coat, a thin, crying kitten.

"Why do you laugh, little boy?" asked the little rich child.

"Because it is Christmas Day, and the bells ring and I had an orange in my stocking," he said. Then, looking at the sorrowful face of the little rich child, he asked, "Did you have no Christmas gift? I will give you this kitten."

As the little rich child took the hungry, cold little kitten and held it close to her fur coat, its purring made her feel very happy inside, indeed happier than she had ever felt before.

All the way home she felt happier and happier until, when she came to her own wide front door, she was singing and her face was bright with smiles.

When the grown-ups woke up from their naps and the servants finished drinking their tea, they found the little rich girl sitting on the floor by the kitchen fire watching the kitten lap warm milk which she had given it. She was still happy and was still singing because the best Christ-

mas gift in the world had come to her—something that needed her love and help.

BUNNY BOBTAIL'S MERRY CHRISTMAS

Bunny Bobtail was a little, little brown rabbit and he lived in a little, little hole at the foot of a very big pine tree.

One morning it was cold and snowy, and the wind blew very hard indeed, Bunny Bobtail was obliged to leave his hole and go for a little journey through the woods. He had eaten no breakfast and he felt very hungry. That was the reason why he had to leave his nice warm bed of leaves to hop across the fields to the turnip patch where he knew that there were two or three turnip stumps still sticking up through the snow.

But on the way to the turnip patch, Bunny Bobtail caught his foot in a trap. It was a trap made of a crooked stick and a string. It tied Bunny Bobtail's foot so tightly that he couldn't unknot

the string for a long, long time. When he was finally able to pull his poor little foot out, he was very lame indeed. He limped slowly back across the snow to his home at the foot of the very big pine tree.

Poor Bunny Bobtail! It was Christmas Eve, and he hadn't eaten his breakfast yet.

Next door to Bunny Bobtail lived little Mrs. Chickadee who was a very busy little person, always learning news and passing it along to somebody else. When the sun was just setting and everything in the woods looked nice and white and sparkling for Christmas, Mrs. Chickadee in her little black bonnet and her little white apron, hopped across the snow to the door of Bunny Bobtail's little, little house, and she twittered.

"Bunny Bobtail, oh, Mr. Bunny Bobtail, have you hung up your stocking? This is Christmas Eve."

But Bunny Bobtail answered Mrs. Chickadee in a sad voice and he said:

"I can't get up out of bed, Mrs.

Chickadee. I am very, very lame, so how can I hang up my stocking?"

"Why, dear me," chirped Mrs. Chickadee spreading out her breast and fairly bursting with the news.

"I must go and tell everybody"; so she flew to the tip top of the pine tree and she sang as loudly as ever she could:

"Chick-a-dee-dee! Listen, everybody, Bunny Bobtail is sick in bed, and he can't hang up his stocking."

She sang it so loudly that Tommy Ground Hog heard and awoke from his nap. Old Bruin Bear heard, and so did the Frisky Squirrels, and the young Cotton Tails who lived on the other side of the turnip patch.

By and by when it was very, very still in the woods, Mrs. Chickadee saw old Bruin Bear stalking along over the snow, and holding a little fir tree between his great paws.

"Where are you going, old Bruin Bear?" twittered Mrs. Chickadee.

"I am going to Bunny Bobtail's house

with a Christmas tree," said old Bruin Bear, and he hurried on.

Pretty soon, Mrs. Chickadee saw Tommy Ground Hog digging his way along through the snow, looking very sleepy, but following the path that old Bruin Bear had made.

"Where are you going, Tommy Ground Hog?" chirped Mrs. Chickadee.

"I am going to Bunny Bobtail's house. I shall dig a hole for his Christmas tree," said Tommy Ground Hog, passing by.

It was not very long before Mrs. Chickadee saw the Frisky Squirrels tripping across the snow on the tips of their toes and carrying bunches of wheat and chains of pig nuts in their paws.

"Where are you going?" twittered Mrs. Chickadee in great excitement because the Frisky Squirrels always stayed at home on Christmas Eve and ate wheat and nuts themselves.

"We are going to Bunny Bobtail's house," chattered the Frisky Squirrels. "We are going to trim Bunny Bobtail's Christmas tree."

Then, just after the Frisky Squirrels were out of sight, Mrs. Chickadee spied two young Cotton Tails hopping along, and one carried cabbage leaves in his mouth, and the other carried juicy turnip stalks.

"Where are you going?" asked Mrs. Chickadee.

"We are going to Bunny Bobtail's house," said the two young Cotton Tails. "We are carrying Bunny Bobtail his Christmas dinner. You may come with us if you like, but don't sing; we are going to surprise Bunny Bobtail."

So Mrs. Chickadee flew along behind the two young Cotton Tails until they all three came to the little, little hole at the foot of the big Pine tree where Bunny Bobtail lived. It was very hard indeed for Mrs. Chickadee to keep from saying something when she saw what was going on there. She had to hold her bill shut with one claw she was so excited, for this was what she saw.

Tommy Ground Hog dug a deep, deep hole, and in it old Bruin Bear stood the

little green fir tree. The Frisky Squirrels hung the little green fir tree with bunches of yellow wheat and festooned the branches with chains of pig nuts. At the foot of the tree the two young Cotton Tails laid the cabbage leaves and the juicy turnip stalks. Then they all crept slowly away. Only Mrs. Chickadee stayed, because she was such a curious little person and wanted to see what would happen.

The moon came out, and after awhile it was so late that it was almost Christmas morning. Bunny Bobtail woke from his sleep and his leg did not feel quite so lame so he thought he would look outside and see what the weather predictions for Christmas were. He rolled out of his bed of leaves and he limped to the door of his house. Then he saw his Christmas tree.

First, he smelled it, and then he tasted everything; the juicy turnip stalks, the cabbage leaves, the wheat, and the pig nuts to see if they were real. They *were* real, and so Bunny Bobtail forgot that he

was lame and he danced a rabbits' horn-pipe in the snow in front of his little, little hole at the foot of the big pine tree because he was so happy.

And Mrs. Chickadee was so happy that she wanted to do something too, for Bobby Bobtail. What do you think she did?

Why she made up a perfectly new Christmas carol and sang it to Bunny Bobtail from the top of the big pine tree.

"*Chick-a-dee-dee!* Merry Christmas to everybody," she sang as loudly and as sweetly as ever she could.

THE LITTLE GRAY LAMB

He stood all alone upon one of the hills, outside of Bethlehem on the first Christmas Eve, long, long ago. There were other lambs all about him, lying like drifts of snow, so white on the purple hills, and the light of the stars made their fleece look more snowlike and more pure. Wrapped in their long cloaks, the shep-

herds dozed and watched the red fires that burned in the hollows of the hills.

But the little gray lamb shivered and bleated. He was very unhappy because he wanted a white fleece. He wanted to be as white as a cloud, as white as a flower, as white as the other lambs, but ever since he could remember he had been covered with a fleece of gray.

As he stood, so sorrowful and sad, the little gray lamb called to the moon, and cried:

"Oh, moon of Bethlehem, pure and bright,
I pray you, give me a fleece of white."

But the night breezes, drifting down from the sky, and rustling through the bushes all about the little gray lamb, brought the moon's message:

"Oh, little gray lamb, alone in the night,
I cannot give you a fleece of white."

Then the sorrowful little gray lamb cried to the clouds that lay like wool in the blue night sky, and he said:

"Oh, clouds of the evening soft and light,
I pray you, give me a fleece of white."

But again the breezes brought a message, this time from the clouds, and they whispered:

"Oh, little gray lamb on Bethlehem's hill,
We cannot reach you. Look farther still."

So the little gray lamb left his place and trotted down the hill and as far as the plain. No one missed him for he was the least loved of all the flock, being so dull in color, and his fleece was of little value. Not one of the shepherds knew that he had gone, and none of the sheep heard his soft feet on the grass of the hillside. There were many white roses of Sharon growing beside the path, and looking at them with his sad little gray face, the lamb cried:

"Oh, Rose of Sharon, with bloom bedight,
Give me, I pray, a fleece of white."

But the wild roses breathing their perfume upon the evening air softly answered:

"Oh, little gray lamb, who prays this night,
We cannot give you a fleece of white."

Still more sorrowful, the little lamb passed through the woods, asking the trees and the wild creatures to change his fleece, but from each came the answer.

"Oh, little gray lamb, who prays this night,
We cannot give you a fleece of white."

The little gray lamb lay down upon the ground quite spent and discouraged, but suddenly as he lay there, a strange light filled the sky and dazzled his eyes so that he could scarcely see. It was as if the heavens had opened wide, and all the glory of its jewel-decked streets shone down upon the earth in the light of one star. The woods were suddenly filled with strange, sweet music, and through the swaying branches of the palms and olive trees there could be seen the white wings of angels.

Stumbling along the wood path, his fleece catching in the thorn bushes and the rough stones cutting his feet, the little

gray lamb followed the light of the star until he came to the walls of Bethlehem, and entered the gate, and then pattered softly over the paved streets. There was noise and bustle and hurry in the streets, although it was so late at night. A strange procession went ahead of the little gray lamb, pushing him one side. It was the procession of the wise men of the East carrying caskets of precious stones and sweet smelling ointment.

On and on marched the procession in the pathway of starlight that lay like a street of gold, nor did it stop until the star hung low in the sky over the door of a lowly stable. There they entered, kneeling with the kine at the foot of a hay-filled manger, bringing their gifts to the little Babe who had come to Bethlehem on this first Christmas Eve.

Limping and sorrowful, and all alone came the little gray lamb, the last creature to find the Christ child. Patiently, longingly, he stood in the doorway apart from all the others and watching with a sad heart as they knelt low on the

floor of the stable and the wise men laid their gifts at the baby's feet. He must not even cross the threshold, he thought.

"I may not see Him nor homage pay,
Unworthy I am since my fleece is gray,"

he cried. But as the sorrowful bleating of the little gray lamb reached the ears of the Christ child, he reached out one fair little hand, beckoning to the lamb to come to His side. Then He laid his hand on its face and a strange thing happened. *The little gray lamb was clothed in a soft white fleece.*

A child may see this same little white lamb today whose fleece was once so gray. He is painted upon the colored windows of great churches, and he lies in green church-yards where the quiet dead are laid to sleep. Sometimes he carries a staff to make a child remember his journey down from the hills of Bethlehem to the manger. Sometimes, in old pictures, the Christ child stands by his side with His hand resting on the lamb's white

fleece, as it did upon that first Christmas Eve.

But wherever a child sees him, the message of the little lamb at Christmas time is the same—one of love, and patience, and humility.

THE LITTLE FIR TREE THAT BLOSSOMED

"You will never hold crimson and gold apples in your twig fingers as I do," rustled the Apple Tree disdainfully.

"What a pity that your leaves are pointed and sharp," breathed the Linden Tree. "It would never do, ah, never, for you to have flowers. Your leaves would tear them quite to bits." And the Linden Tree lifted her pale green flowers higher that a little wandering breeze might carry their perfume as far as the village.

"How ugly you are, and of how little use," sighed the Oak Tree. "Why do

you not bear acorns and change your dress as I do?"

But the little Fir Tree was silent. How could it answer since it was so tiny that its rustling could never reach as high as the branches of the Apple, the Linden and the Oak? For the same reason, too, was the Fir Tree silent. It knew that all this was quite, quite true. For many years it had stood there in the hollow place of the hillside, winter and summer and then summer and winter again, never blossoming, never bearing apples or nuts, never changing its dingy green dress.

"You are only good to be burned for fagots in a fire," chattered the Squirrel who happened by when the frosts came and the snow lay deep. "Why do you not grow straight and tall so that I might live in your trunk?"

"He is right; I am of no use at all," sighed the little Fir Tree, and it drooped its head and its body bent even lower as the cruel North Wind passed.

Lower and lower bent the little green tree. Snap, crash, crackle, crunch! The

little Fir Tree lay on the cold crust of the snow. It had broken its crooked self and now there was nothing left of it in the forest but roots.

"To be burned for fagots! To be burned for fagots!" whispered the sharp-pointed leaves of the Fir Tree to each other as the tree felt itself being loaded upon the Woodcutter's sledge and drawn far, far away from the forest. The sledge made a loud, creaking noise as it slid along the forest path and then turned into the streets of the village and stopped at the door of the woodcutter's house.

"How terrible the fire will feel," groaned the branches of the little Fir Tree. It stood in front of a glowing fire, now, and the woodcutter was piling this high with great fagots that creaked and crackled and then burst into rosy sparks.

"It will be my turn next," the little Fir Tree thought and its green heart was full of sadness.

"Even my fingers are sharp and ugly," it sighed, "not fit for holding flowers and

fruit. It is right that I should be burned."

But, ah, as the little Fir Tree stretched out long, green fingers a gold flower fell into them. The flower was made of gilt tinsel and was very, very beautiful. It rested safely on the tip of a green twig as if it had grown there. To another twig fell a crimson and gold apple. The apple was made of sugar and was very, very sweet. It hung to a green twig as securely as possible. Then down to the little Fir Tree's stiff, green arms fell more, and more beautiful things. There were long strings of silver stuff that covered the tree like a vine. There were gold and silver stars and gingerbread nuts and winged fairies and snowballs made of popcorn and dolls and trumpets and a brave red soldier and a smart red drum. When there were no twigs left upon which to hang beautiful things, the children of the woodcutter ran into the room, shouting:

"The Christmas Tree! Our Christmas Tree! How pretty, how gay!"

And the little Fir Tree? Why, his little green heart nearly burst with joy. He had learned that *all* trees blossom, Apple Trees in the fall and little prickly Fir Trees at the blessed Christmas tide.

NANCY'S NEW YEAR GIFTS

It was a very curious circumstance indeed, but Nancy's birthday came on New Year's day. She was a New Year baby, born on the very first day of the year.

Because her birthday came so very near Christmas Day, Nancy's birthday gifts were always very, very simple.

"I really shouldn't have any birthday presents at all," Nancy said always, "after Santa Claus has been so kind to me."

You see Nancy was a very sensible little girl. That was the reason why she was not one bit surprised one New Year's day when she found just one gift beside her bed when she woke up in the morning,—a little red wash tub, and a rubbing

board and a tiny, tiny cake of yellow soap.

New Year's day came on Monday so, directly after breakfast, Nancy filled the little red tub with warm water and washed out her dolls' clothes. She washed them so clean that her mother let her wash some doilies and a tea towel after the dolls' clothes were finished. Nancy thought when the day was over that she had never had such a nice birthday gift before, but what was her surprise when she awoke on Tuesday morning to find another surprise. This time it was a shining little flat iron that stood on her dolls' table, just large enough to stand on the stove beside mother's big flat irons. When it was piping hot, Nancy ironed all the dolls' clothes and the doilies and the tea towel. Oh! it was such fun, and she went to bed wondering if perhaps there would be a third surprise for her in the morning.

And there was another surprise. It was a box of little tin dishes for Nancy to cook in all day long. She made thimble

biscuit, and a tiny loaf of cake. Then she set the dolls' table with the tin dishes, and she and the dolls had a tea party.

"Oh, do you suppose there will be more surprises after this?" Nancy asked her mother when she went to bed, and her mother smiled as she said:

"Perhaps, little girl. Just wait and see."

There were surprises, every day of the whole week. Thursday, Nancy found a little yellow broom and a dustpan, and so she helped her mother sweep the playroom. Friday there was a shining little tin dish pan and a red and white dish cloth.

After Nancy had washed the dolls' dishes she did the breakfast silver, and the coffee cups, for the little dish pan was quite large enough to hold them. Saturday brought Nancy a fine, red watering pot to use in giving all the house plants a drink of water in the morning.

"So many birthday presents," Nancy said, looking at the little red wash tub,

the shining iron, the dishes, the dish pan, and the watering pot.

"And such an industrious little girl," said Nancy's mother, "who is going to use all her gifts all the year long."

THE NEW DAY

It was the very first beautiful, white day of a new white year. You could be perfectly sure that it was a new day because the world had not looked so lovely before, no, not in three hundred and sixty-four other days. Every field was covered with a new white cloak, and every tree was hung with a million glistening little diamonds. The fence posts and the piazza pillars wore new white snow dresses, and the sky was, oh, so blue.

Jolly, round Mr. Sun looked with his great yellow eye down at the world.

"This is a new day and I am going to make it a sunny day," said round Mr. Sun and so he straightway shone and shone, and beamed and beamed.

The House Cat who sat on the nicely-swept door-step felt the sun shining so warm and strong on her back.

"This is a new day. Round Mr. Sun has made it a sunny day so I must make it a happy day," the House Cat mewed and she washed her face and stroked her fur, and purred and purred and purred.

The Red Rose that stood in a flower pot on the kitchen window-sill looked out at the world.

"This is a new day. Round Mr. Sun has made it a sunny day. The House Cat has made it a happy day, so I must make it a pretty day," thought the Red Rose, and it stretched and reached and pulled until one of its little green buds opened into a pretty new little red rose.

The Mother came down to the kitchen just then and she saw the flower, and the sunny room and she opened the door that the House Cat might come in and purr in front of the fire.

"This is a new day," the Mother said. "Round Mr. Sun has made it a sunny day, the House Cat has made it a happy

day, the Red Rose has made it a pretty day, so I must make it a busy day," she said, and she laid out her shining pans, her white, white flour and her big wooden bowl ready to make many loaves of wheat bread.

Way, way upstairs there was a Child fast asleep. Sometimes when the child awoke, there were frowns instead of dimples in his chin. Sometimes he cried because his bath was cold, and pouted if no one helped him to lace his shoes, but he neither frowned nor cried nor pouted this morning.

"This is a new day," he said, as he opened his eyes, smiling.

"Yes, and I made it a sunny day," laughed Round Mr. Sun, shining in at the nursery window.

"And I made it a happy day," purred the House Cat, who had come softly upstairs on her velvet shod feet.

"And I made it a pretty day," breathed the Red Rose from its place on the kitchen window-sill, and the perfume

of her little red bloom reached as far as the Child's room.

"And I am making it a busy day," said the Mother running into the nursery and putting her arms close around the child. "What kind of a day will you make it, little son?" she asked.

"I will make it a good day," laughed back the Child.

So the new day was as beautiful as it could possibly be, because it was a sunny, happy, pretty, busy, and good kind of a day.

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON BOY

Once upon a time there was a little boy who wanted to be like George Washington.

"George Washington's birthday is coming soon," his dear mother told him. "Then there will be beautiful red-white-and-blue flags flying through all the city

and the soldiers will march and the band will play."

"There will be no school," his teacher told the little boy, "on George Washington's birthday. And all the shops and offices and the great banks where all the money is kept will be having a holiday, too."

"I'm to be like George Washington," said the little boy who lived next door. "I shall be allowed to look at my great, great grandfather's sword on George Washington's birthday. My mother will let me hold it and polish the blade. My great, great grandfather was a soldier."

So it came to be almost time for the great holiday and the little boy began to wish and wish and wish.

"I wish that I could be like George Washington," he said over and over again.

"Oh, you couldn't be that," said the little boy next door, "because your great, great grandfather wasn't a soldier."

This discouraged the little boy very

much and he, too, believed that his wish would never come true.

One day when it was beginning to feel a little warm just as if the springtime were on its way over the hill, the little boy took his skates and called to his faithful little dog, Sport, and started away for the icy pond.

"Don't go out to the middle of the pond," called his mother. "The ice may be thin."

"I won't go out to the middle of the pond," called back the little boy and then, straight-off he forgot all about it. Sport ran gaily along by his side, sometimes going a little ahead and barking, "Come on, little master, come on." The ice was glittering and bright and after he had put on his skates, the little boy glided off, farther and farther and nearer to the middle. Close behind came dog Sport, slipping and sliding and trying to keep up.

"*Woof, woof!* Don't go too far, little master," called Sport, but the boy did not heed him.

Crack, splash! The thin ice in the

middle of the pond had broken and the boy had fallen in the deep, cold water. Would he drown? Oh, he might have drowned if good Sport had not caught him by his coat collar and bracing all four of his feet against a strong tree branch which had frozen into the ice, held him there. Then a nearby ice-cutter who had seen the little boy's danger, ran across the ice and pulled him out and carried him home.

"Whose fault was this?" asked the boy's mother after he had been given hot lemonade and warmly tucked in bed, and Sport had been given a huge bone.

"It was all my fault, mother," said the little boy. "I forgot and went out to the middle of the pond where the ice was thin. I didn't mind you."

Then there was another day when the little boy and Sport went to market together. Sport was the happiest little dog that ever wagged a tail when he was allowed to go to market. He always carried the market basket in his mouth with the money wrapped in a paper, inside,

and when the errands were done, he carried the packages home in the basket.

Sport's basket was very full as he and the little boy started home. There were a pot of jam and some rosy apples and a big brown bundle that was Sport's very own bone. Sport held his head high and looked neither to the right nor to the left. That is the reason why he did not see the galloping horse and team coming down the road. But the little boy saw the team. He gathered up Sport, basket, bundles and all in his arms, and the horse just grazed them but did not hurt them one bit.

Then it came to be George Washington's birthday and everything happened just as people had said that it would. Beautiful red-white-and-blue flags floated from all the buildings and the soldiers marched and the band played. There was no school and the little boy next door was allowed to hold his great, great grandfather's sword and polish it.

"Oh, I wish that I could be like George Washington," the little boy said once

more. Then his mother brought out for him a soldier hat with a plume and a little bright, tin sword and a loud sounding, red drum.

"You are like George Washington, dear," she said as she helped him put them on."

"How?" he asked.

"Because you are truthful and brave," she said.

THE COOKY VALENTINE.

There was once a little girl who loved everybody in the world and whom everybody loved, so when it came to be Saint Valentine's Day, when all who love each other remember each other, everybody said:

"What shall we give Dear-Heart for her valentine? How can we give her a valentine that will be different from any that she ever had before?" they wondered.

"I shall give her some golden wheat," sang the reapers who worked in the yel-

low wheat fields and as they worked, they sang:

"Wheat so yellow and ripe and fine,
To make Dear-Heart a Valentine."

So the reapers carried the sheaves of wheat to the threshers and left it with them in their great barns, and the threshers began separating the kernels from the chaff, singing as they worked:

"Wheat so yellow and ripe and fine,
Thresh we now for the valentine."

So the threshers finished separating the wheat kernels from the chaff and they carried the kernels to the miller and left them there in his big hoppers. The huge mill wheels began turning and as white flour came out from the grinding, the miller who loved Dear-Heart, too, sang:

"Flour of wheat my wheels now grind,
To make Dear-Heart a valentine."

So the miller sent his huge bags of white flour to the store and they waited

there on the storekeeper's shelves with many other things until the cook came to the store with her fat purse and her big basket.

"Sugar and spice and flour so fine,
To make Dear-Heart a valentine,"

she said. So the storekeeper filled her bag with goodies and the cook took them home with her to the house where Dear-Heart's mother waited in the kitchen.

And the mother mixed creamy butter and sweetest sugar and many eggs and spices and the good wheat flour, singing as she beat them all together:

"Mix and stir the dough so fine,
To make Dear-Heart a valentine."

So the funny, queer, sweet valentine was made. It came out of the oven crisp and brown. It was a big, heart cooky. Dear-Heart's mother covered it with pretty pink icing and carried it to Dear-Heart on a plate that had pink rosebuds

around the edge. As she gave it to Dear-Heart she said:

"Love of the cook, dear, and love of mine,
Farmer and thresher and miller fine
Baked in a heart for your valentine."

And although Dear-Heart had many lace paper and colored picture and pretty rhymed valentines, not one was so sweet as the cooky heart.

BUNNY BOBTAIL'S EASTER

Bunny Bobtail, the smallest white rabbit, hid behind the tree stump, very forlorn and very unhappy. His coat was covered with mud and the wind blew in a gusty way, making his whiskers bristle and his ears stand up straight, for Bunny Bobtail was lost.

Early that morning, he had started out from Farmer Brown's barn in search of new green grass to nibble, but he had found the roads very bad and the fences and walls hard to creep under. Bunny

Bobtail found no grass that was tall enough to nibble and now he could not find his way home. Poor little Bunny Bobtail! Although he stamped and stamped on the ground, which was his funny way of talking, his mother did not hear him. She was far, far away, in Farmer Brown's barn and she had forgotten all about little runaway Bunny. Perhaps it would grow dark and he would still have to stay there in the night.

What was that? Bunny heard children's voices.

"Hasn't it been a nice Easter?" It was a little girl's voice. Then the boy's voice answered:

"Well, I just guess so. Oh, I say; look here. It's a little rabbit, lost. Let's take him home, sister."

"Oh," cried the little girl in her soft voice. She picked Bunny Bobtail gently up in her arms. "Perhaps it's the Easter rabbit. I have read about him in story books, but I never, never saw him before. He shall have carrots and cabbages and bread and milk, shall he not, Brother?"

"Yes," said the boy, "and I shall build him a fine little house with a thatched roof in the back yard."

"How very pleasant it will feel to be the Easter Rabbit," thought Bunny Bob-tail, snuggling his tired little head in the child's soft arms.

THE WONDER EGG

Gretchen was the little flaxen-ha. girl whose mother washed the clothes as white as snow and ironed them in dainty frills and flutings. Nancy often saw Gretchen at the kitchen door with the red wagon in which she brought home the basket of washing. Such a blue-eyed, rosy-cheeked, little German lass in a frayed frock, and a coat that was patched at the elbows.

One day it was very, very cold and Gretchen's nose was blue, too, so Nancy opened the door wide.

"Come in, little girl," she called, "and

sit down by the fire. You look so very cold."

So Gretchen came shyly in and sat by the kitchen fire and toasted her toes and warmed her fingers and said a shy, *good-bye,* when she went away.

Another day, it was very, very rainy and Gretchen's worn shoes were quite soaked with the rain when she came, bringing the clothes. But Nancy took her hand and drew her into the kitchen, where mother took off the wet shoes and dried the feet and fitted upon them a pair of Nancy's own shoes. Oh, how little Gretchen's eyes smiled as she said, "thank you," and slipped out of the door to go home.

Then there was a very beautiful sunshiny day. The trees were hung with green leaves and a robin sang in the lilac bush, the lawn was covered with a carpet of new grass and here and there a yellow dandelion shone as yellow as gold because it was Easter Day. All the house clothes were clean. That is why Nancy was so surprised to hear a very faint knock at

the front door and to see little Gretchen there, dressed in a white frock that was white and neat although it had been mended in a great many places.

She held a white parcel in her hands and when she stepped inside and took off the wrappings, there was a beautiful, big, sugar egg. It was as shining as crystal, and it had a pink candy rose on the top. In one end there was a little glass window.

"It is for you, because you have been so kind to me," said little Gretchen, eagerly. "It came with my father on the great ship from Germany. He has come to take my mother and me home when the warm days come. Look through the glass," she cried eagerly, "and see what there is for your eyes, inside."

She held the sugar egg up to Nancy's eyes and Nancy looked inside. Oh, such a wonderful sight as she saw! A little white palace set in the midst of a forest of tiny green trees. A wee little lake, and a flock of silver swans and on the

banks of the lake, many gaily dressed little ladies and gentlemen.

"It is a picture of my country," said Gretchen, "for you who have been so good to me," and the washwoman's little child ran home, while Nancy stood, too happy for words, with the beautiful sugar egg in her eager hands.

HAROLD'S HAPPY EASTER

For many, many weeks Harold had been obliged to sit still in a big arm chair because he had a sprained ankle.

"I don't mind it so much now," he said to his dear mother, when it was snowing and gray clouds shut out the sunshine, "but what shall I do when the spring comes?"

"We shall see, Harold," his dear mother answered with a smile.

The spring came presently. Blue sky and yellow sunshine and red-breasted robins and white snowdrops made the spring. As Harold sat in his arm chair

by the window, he watched the boy who worked for the florist pass by with a huge pot of tall, white lilies.

"It will be Easter Day soon," Harold said, and a little round tear squeezed itself out of each one of his big brown eyes and trickled down his cheeks. "I wish I could keep Easter."

"Shut your eyes, Harold, until I say *ready,*" laughed his dear mother. Harold was so surprised that he shut his eyes quickly, closing inside all the other little round tears which had been waiting to squeeze themselves out.

"Ready!" called his dear mother. Harold opened his eyes. Oh, the surprise that awaited him!

Upon the play table right in front of his big chair he saw all these treasures. There were six white eggs which Biddy Short Legs, his little brown hen, had laid for him, and five of them his dear mother had boiled. There was his box of paints of many colors. There was a pot of white paste. There were scissors and many

pieces of tissue paper, pink and green and white and yellow and blue.

"Now we will make these eggs into beautiful Easter gifts for all our friends," explained Harold's dear mother.

So they made one egg into a funny doctor man's head for the kind doctor man who had taken care of Harold for so many weeks. He had a smiling face painted on the egg and big black spectacles cut from black tissue paper were pasted on. A stiff white paper collar was pasted about the smaller end of the egg and a stiff black paper hat was pasted upon the larger end of the egg. Oh, such a funny little Easter gift as it made!

Then Harold painted two beautiful eggs for the little twin girls who lived next door. First, his mother drew on each egg a picture of a white lily and Harold painted the outside of each egg around the picture of the lily a beautiful yellow. When the yellow paint was dry, Harold's dear mother tied yellow

ribbon with bows about each egg. They were very pretty indeed.

Next Harold wanted to make an Easter egg for Tommy, the kind little boy who lived across the street. So he painted one egg brown like a round, brown football. When the paint was dry his dear mother drew on the egg some fine pencil lines like the leather lacing of a football. Harold painted these lines black and the egg looked like a real football. Harold knew that Tommy's eyes would shine when he saw it.

The fourth egg was to be made into an Easter gift for little Edith who lived in the house just beyond the twins. Harold's dear mother helped him to paint a sweet little girl's face on the egg. Then they pasted on yellow braids made of braided twisted yellow tissue paper and tied at the ends with bits of pale blue ribbon. Next came a little white cap made of tissue paper with a pink tissue paper rose over each ear. Last, a full ruffle of pink tissue paper was pasted to the narrow end of the

egg. It looked like a dress and made the tiny egg doll stand. It was a pretty little doll and not like any to be found in a toy shop. It would make Edith very happy.

"What shall I do with this egg?" Harold asked.

"We shall give it to Granny Gray who lives in the little lane at the end of the street and who is ill nearly always," Harold's dear mother said.

So she found a tiny basket and Harold snipped and snipped bits of tissue paper, —pink and green and white and yellow and blue—until there was enough to make a nest inside the basket. In the nest they laid the egg and a little package of tea and a little jar of jelly and a little pot of cheese.

"I wish—" began Harold. Then he looked at the beautiful gifts that he had made. "Why, I can keep Easter," he finished happily.

THE FRESH AIRS' FOURTH OF JULY

"What shall we do with all this money?" asked the twins.

The two, Bobby and Betty, sat side by side, two brown heads close together, on the front steps of the cottage. They took off the head of the little iron pig that was their money bank and poured out its contents into their laps. Yes, indeed, there was quite a good deal of money for a little boy and girl to have earned. There was a bright fifty-cent piece that Betty had earned by picking green peas and wiping the dishes every day. There was a bright quarter that Bobby had earned by carrying vegetables to market in his little red wheelbarrow. And there was another bright silver quarter that Bobby had earned by taking care of the walks.

"Of course we will spend it for Fourth of July, Bobby,' said Betty.

"Yes, indeed! We will spend it for Fourth of July," replied Bobby.

"Soldier caps and shooting rockets and torpedoes!" exclaimed Betty.

"And a cannon and a cap pistol and lots of bunches of firecrackers," added Bobby.

It did seem as if a whole dollar would do a great deal in the way of buying fireworks. Mother and father had said when they gave the twins the money that they had earned, that it was to be spent just exactly as they wished. The village store that stood at the end of the street had a window full of fireworks. For many days the twins had gone down the street and looked in the store window and chosen the Fourth of July things that they would like. Now they could buy them! Oh, how happy they were!

They put the money into their two just-alike red pocketbooks and jumped up. As they turned toward the gate, a chorus of merry laughter stopped them. It came from the big white house next

door where the Fresh Air children were spending the summer.

There were ten of the Fresh Air children: five little boys in blue overalls and big straw hats, and five little girls in pink gingham and wide-brimmed sunbonnets. When they had come from the city on the train they had looked very thin and pale, but now the little boys were freckled and fat and the little girls were sunburned and fat. They had plenty of fresh milk and bread and butter and meat and potatoes and apples, but not many toys. Still they were the most rollicking, happy children that Bobby and Betty had ever known. They, with all their toys and games and picture-books and the croquet set, sometimes could not find anything to do. But the Fresh Airs were always happy, making up plays that did not need any toys. They could be Indians or explorers or gypsies or fairies quite easily.

"I wonder if the Fresh Airs will have any Fourth of July things," Betty asked very thoughtfully.

"I don't believe they will," Bobby answered, quite soberly.

Wonderful, bright, noisy Fourth of July came. All up and down the street came the happy sounds of firecrackers and torpedoes and cap snapping. In the afternoon Bobby and Betty stood on their front steps, tip-toe with happiness, but they had no soldier caps or shooting rockets or torpedoes or any cannon or pistol or firecrackers.

"Do you suppose they got the invitations? Do you suppose they will come?" asked Betty.

"I hope so. Oh, goody, here they are!" laughed Bobby.

In through the gate tumbled five little Fresh Air boys in blue overhalls and big straw hats, and five little Fresh Air girls in pink gingham and wide-brimmed sunbonnets. Up to the front steps they ran and then waited in great excitement. The twins opened a basket they had between them and took out—what do you suppose?

Oh, there was a big red rubber ball for

each Fresh Air boy and there was a nice five-cent china doll for each Fresh Air girl. There was a big red firecracker for each Fresh Air child but when they were opened, they turned out to be candy boxes full of red and white peppermint drops. The Fresh Airs laughed and clapped their hands and began playing at once, the twins helping.

It was the nicest Fourth of July that they or Bobby and Betty had ever known even if there were no fireworks.

THE LITTLE LEAF'S THANKSGIVING

"The little Leaf is crying," said the little brown twig in its creaking way to the branch on which it grew.

"The little Leaf is crying," said the big branch in its sighing way to the great gray trunk of the tree on which it grew, and the tree began to bend and sway and speak to the other trees that stood near

it, for it loved the little Leaf and did not wish to have it cry.

Still the little Leaf *was* crying—not as children cry with a great deal of noise and commotion, but with a tiny, far-away high, rustling sound, the sound that anyone may hear in the woods every fall when the wind is passing through.

"Why is the little Leaf crying?" asked the trees in the woods in their mighty way of the big brown branch.

"Why is the little Leaf crying?" asked the big brown branch of the little brown twig.

"Why are you crying, little Leaf?" asked the little brown twig on which the little Leaf grew.

And the little Leaf stopped crying in its tiny, far-away voice just one wee bit of a second to rustle back to the twig:

"I am crying because I am the last little Leaf."

That was quite, quite true. It was the last little Leaf. One at a time and gaily all the other leaves in the woods had put on their gold and crimson dresses and

fluttered down from their twigs and away out of sight like a flock of birds.

Why had they gone?

Where had they gone?

Ah, the little Leaf who was left behind could not tell. He still hung, alone and dull in color, on the twig. He was very, very lonely.

So the twig repeated it to the branch and the branch carried it on to the tree and the tree spoke to the Cold about it.

"The little Leaf is lonely," said the tree in its mighty way to the Cold.

So the Cold brought a very, very beautiful new dress for the little Leaf. It was crimson and gold all mixed in together in wonderful splashes and spots. When the Cold put this crimson and gold dress on the little Leaf, it quite covered up its other, dull dress and the little Leaf *almost* stopped crying for happiness.

"The little Leaf is lonely," said the tree in its mighty way to the Wind.

So the Wind came sweeping down to the very twig where the little Leaf in its new crimson and gold dress hung. The

Wind stopped whistling the boisterous tune it had been whistling before and it whispered a little secret song to the little Leaf. It must have been a very pretty secret, although no one but the Wind and the little Leaf knew what it was about, for directly the little Leaf heard it, it quite stopped crying and began fluttering and dancing about on its little brown twig as if it were very, *very* happy.

Then the Wind whispered and whispered to the little Leaf and suddenly the little Leaf loosened its wee little stem from the twig and went twirling and whirling down through the air with the wind close behind.

The Wind was taking the little Leaf for a journey.

Over and over the brown earth it tumbled and whirled, very happy and contented, for it met many other leaves on the way and they were all laughing queer, jolly little rustling laughs. You can hear the leaves laughing today if you only listen.

The little Leaf wanted to stop and

play tag and merry-go-round with the other leaves, but the Wind pushed it on farther and farther still, for the other leaves did not need the little Leaf.

Presently it came to a place in the woods where the nuts lay thickly in the ground. A fat squirrel was busily taking the nuts, one by one, in his paws and putting them away in his house at the foot of a big gray stump. The little Leaf wished to stop to rest its little gold and crimson self on the threshold of the squirrel's house, but the Wind pushed it on farther and farther still, for the squirrel did not need the little Leaf.

After a while it came to a little brown bush that stood sturdily beside the path. Such a shiny little brown bush, and it had covered its little brown self with hundreds and hundreds of little red berries. It had really made itself into a dinner table for the snow birds and a very pretty one, too. The little Leaf wanted to stop underneath the brown bush to see if the birds would notice its gold and crimson self but the wind pushed it on farther and

farther still, for the little brown bush did not need the little Leaf.

And just then it came to a place in the woods where the trees stood very far apart and the air was very cold and a few snow flakes were drifting down from the sky in a very chilly way. In this bare, lonely, chilly place there lay a little Brown Seed—all alone and very cold. The Wind whirled the little Leaf round and round the little Brown Seed and then gently laid it over the little Brown Seed like a crimson and gold cloak, warm and comfortable, for the little Brown Seed needed the little Leaf.

And the little Leaf decided to stay there all winter and forget about his loneliness in keeping the little Brown Seed from being lonely. You see he knew all sorts of pretty songs that he could sing to the little Brown Seed in his pleasant little way—songs that he had learned from the crickets and the bees and the birds in the summer—songs that were sleepy and would give the Brown Seed pretty dreams.

So the Wind went on and left them there together in the woods,—the happy little Brown Seed and the happy thankful little Leaf. You see the Wind couldn't possibly stay with them any longer. It was Thanksgiving Day and he was on his way to town.

GRANDMOTHER'S THANKSGIVING PRESENT

It was going to be the nicest Thanksgiving Day that the Davis children had known for a long, long time. Dear Grandmother Davis with her gray curls and her gold spectacles and her twinkling smile was coming all the way from the farm to spend the day with them. It was the week before Thanksgiving, but the children were all planning wonderful secrets and all manner of delightful surprises for dear grandmother.

"I shall make her a loaf of raisin cake," said Hilda, who was quite a grown-up girl now, and very clever at cooking.

"Well, I am going to knit grandmother a white shawl," said Elizabeth. "I'm sure that I shall be able to finish it in a week, and I know that grandmother will like a shawl better than a cake."

"And what is our little Peggy going to do?" asked Mother Davis, patting the little girl's brown hair. Peggy was a very thoughtful, kind little girl, even if she was only eight years old.

"Oh, Peggy can't make anything for grandmother," said Hilda, quite decidedly. "She's much too small a child."

"Yes indeed," said Elizabeth, "but, of course, grandmother won't expect Peggy to do anything for her."

"Grandmother will be happy to just see how sweet and good Peggy is," Mother Davis finished. "Now run along, dear, and play."

So Peggy went upstairs to her own little room, but instead of playing with her doll, she wrinkled up her forehead and thought and thought, until finally she thought of something nice to do for

Grandmother Davis' Thanksgiving surprise.

Thanksgiving was a beautiful, sunny day, smelling of bonfires and orchards and pumpkins out-of-doors, and of turkey and mince pie in the house. Grandmother Davis came and everybody was happy and everybody ate a great deal of dinner. When the dinner was over, Hilda brought in her raisin cake, which grandmother thought was the best she had ever tasted. Then Elizabeth wrapped her all up in a fleecy-white shawl, and grandmother said that she had never been so comfortable before in all her life.

Last of all, Peggy slipped out of her chair at the dinner table into grandmother's lap.

"I made you a Thanksgiving present, grandmother dear," she said, and she pulled a little book out of her pocket.

"Why, bless the child!" said grandmother, putting on her spectacles, and she began to read the book.

It was made of scraps of wrapping paper sewed together, but it had a spray of

red leaves painted on the cover, and it was labeled in printed letters: "Peggy's Thankful Book."

The first page said, in Peggy's scribbled writing:

"I am thankful for my mother, more than anything else."

Underneath the writing was a little kodak picture of Mother Davis that Peggy had taken herself.

The next page said:

"I am thankful that dear grandmother is coming to see us."

Over it Peggy had drawn a little picture of a farmhouse and a country road and she had colored the house red and the road brown.

There were other pages just full of writing, and Peggy had put down many things that no one else would have thought of: how she was thankful for keeping her temper, and for the school spelling match that she had won, and for a red apple, and for Tinker, the old pussy.

Grandmother Davis had to wipe her spectacles before she finished reading the Thankful Book, and Hilda and Elizabeth thought that Peggy's gift was really very nice indeed.

WHO'S THANKFUL?

"Now what have we all to be thankful for?" said Mrs. Field Mouse who sat in her soft little gray gown in the fields, Thanksgiving night, when all the children were fast asleep, and only the wild creatures were awake.

"I am very glad indeed that Farmer Brown left a few turnips in his field for us. I don't know how I should get through the winter without them," said Old Man Rabbit, as he hopped by on his way to his hole with a fat turnip in his mouth.

"I'm thankful to Peter," chattered the red squirrel. "He counted his nuts, and he left every fifth one for me. I'm nicely fixed for the winter."

"I'm glad that the corn bag leaked

when Farmer Brown carried it across the barnyard," cawed a huge black crow. "My, but I had a feast!"

"I am thankful to the hedgehog," said a little prickly seed. "He carried me on his back for half a mile and dropped me here in this nice soft earth where I shall sprout and grow to be a great tree some day."

"I'm glad I'm alive." It was a wriggling, furry worm that spoke. "Peter almost stepped on me, but he saw me in time, and here I am safe and sound ready to spin a cocoon and come out a butterfly next spring."

"Well, I've much more to be thankful for than any of you," said the woodchuck. "I wanted to eat some carrots I saw on the edge of the field just now, but I passed them by. There was a trap behind them."

"How very much we all have to be thankful for," chirped Mrs. Field Mouse, nibbling daintily at a stalk of wheat which she held between her tiny, tiny paws.

THE THANKSGIVING CAKE

It was a little round white cake with pink frosting upon the top and it was all Nancy's own for her Thanksgiving Day dessert. It stood right at her place at the table on a little round china plate that had a border of pink rosebuds, and Nancy knew that it was the nicest cake of the whole year.

When she had eaten it all, and there was not even a tiny pink crumb left, Nancy hopped down from her place.

"I want to thank dear Grandmother for making me this cake," she said, so she ran to the sunny sitting-room where dear Grandmother in her white cap and shiny spectacles was just nodding off in an after-dinner nap.

Nancy ran softly over to her rocking chair and dropped a kiss on dear Grandmother's pinky-white cheek.

"Thank you for the little white cake, dear Grandmother!" she said.

"The blessed child!" said dear Grand-

mother in a soft, sleepy voice. "She thinks I'm to be thanked for the cake. I only mixed the dough. Thank Mrs. Leghorn Hen who laid six fine eggs that made the cake so rich and light."

So Nancy put on her little red hood that hung on a nail in the hall and she ran out through the garden and as far as the barn where Mrs. Leghorn Hen sat on her nest of yellow straw, comfortably cackling.

"Oh, Mrs. Leghorn Hen" Nancy cried, tossing the fat hen a handful of kernels of gold corn.

"Thank you for the six fine eggs that you laid for my Thanksgiving cake."

"Cut, cut ca-da-cut!" clucked Mrs. Leghorn Hen.

"You're very welcome, I'm sure, but you must thank Mrs. Mooly Cow for her rich cream. She helped, too, with the cake."

So Nancy slipped out of the barn, and as far as the gate where Mrs. Mooly Cow stood, waiting to be let in.

"Oh, Mrs. Mooly Cow," she cried,

gathering up an armful of hay and giving it to the good red cow. "Thank you for the cream you gave for my Thanksgiving cake."

"Moo-oo," lowed Mrs. Mooly Cow softly, "I gave my cream gladly, but you must thank the kind miller who ground the wheat into flour for your cake."

So Nancy ran out of the gate and down the lane through the drifts of red and yellow leaves until she came to the tall brown mill where the miller stood in the door, all dusty and white with flour.

"Oh, thank you," she cried to the miller, "for the flour you ground for my cake."

"Well, what a fine little lass to remember the old man of the mill," answered the miller, patting Nancy's red hood.

"But there is the wheat field." He pointed to the field of gold stubble that lay in front of the mill, shining in the sunshine. "The farmer planted it, and the rain watered it, and the sun kept it warm. Without the wheat there would have been no flour."

"How very wonderful! Thank you for telling me," said Nancy looking all about her in surprise. "Oh, I didn't know so much was baked into one little cake! I must go home and tell Grandmother," she cried as she hurried home.

Grandmother was fast asleep though, and so Nancy sat down beside the window in her little red rocking chair and thought, and thought, and thought all the rest of the Thanksgiving afternoon.

PUSSY TINKER'S THANKSGIVING

He was a fat, home pussy with a coat as black as coal and as soft as velvet, and as sleek as baths and brushing and combing could make it. His eyes were like two bits of jade, and he had a purr that was as loud as a steam engine. His name was Tinker and he never, never went over the back fence. He always stayed in a corner of the garden when it was summer, and in front of the kitchen stove when the cold days came.

Once upon a time, it came to be Thanksgiving Day, and every single person in the family helped to get Pussy Tinker's Thanksgiving dinner ready. Grandmother found a new tin plate in the pantry and mother cut up some chicken meat in very tiny bits because Tinker's teeth were old, and little sister poured some cream into a blue china bowl, and little brother set the tin plate of chicken and the bowl of milk in front of the stove where Tinker could enjoy it, and then the family called:

"Tinker, Tinker, Tink-a-Tink! come Tinker." But no pussy Tinker came.

Then the little brother went out in the garden to look for pussy Tinker, and what do you suppose he saw?

Why, he saw the tip end of pussy Tinker's black tail going over the back fence!

"Pussy Tinker's gone over the back fence," cried the little boy, running into the house.

"Oh, dear! Pussy Tinker will be lost," cried the little sister.

"Tinker never went over the back fence in his life before," said Mother.

"What has come into Tinker's head?" said the Grandmother.

And none of the family really enjoyed the turkey and the cranberry sauce and the pumpkin pie because they were so worried about Tinker.

It grew late in the afternoon, and then the sun went down, but still Tinker did not come home. Grandmother covered up his dinner with a saucer so it would not get full of ashes. Then little brother and sister stood at the kitchen window, their noses pressed against the window pane, watching for Tinker.

When it was nearly dark, they heard a sound: *scratch, scratch, scratch* at the kitchen door. Little sister ran to open the door, and there stood pussy Tinker, as proud as a cock and purring like half a dozen steam engines. By his side stood a very thin, homely, dirty gray cat who looked as if she had never eaten chicken meat nor drunk cream in her life.

"Purr-rr-rr! Here's a friend come to

share my dinner," Tinker seemed to say, and the strange cat walked with her muddy feet into the kitchen and began eating Tinker's Thanksgiving Dinner very fast. Although he must have been very hungry and tired after his trip over the back fence, Tinker did not once try to take the food away from his friend. He just stood by watching, and purring loud purrs until the dinner was all gone, and then he stretched himself by the fire as if to say:

"Now, for a nap, I'm sleepy, and I know you are."

"Of course pussy Tinker had a fine dinner, and a turkey drumstick for dessert, but wasn't he a kind pussy to feed his friend?"

THE HURRY-UP BOY

"Hurry, Harold!" That was Harold's mother. It was half-past seven o'clock and a sunny morning, but Harold still sat on the edge of the bed with his hair

not combed yet and his shoes unlaced and his necktie on the floor.

"Hurry, Harold!" That was Harold's good cook, Mary. The table was beautifully laid for breakfast, the creamy milk which the milkman had just brought foamed in Harold's mug and the eggs bubbled on Mary's stove. But Harold had still one shoe to lace and now his necktie was lost.

"Hurry, Harold!" That was Harold's father who had finished his breakfast and had his hat and coat on all ready to go to the city. He waited at the door to kiss Harold good-bye, but Harold was still slowly eating his porridge and his father could not wait.

"Hurry up, Harold!" That was Peter, who lived next door. Peter was hurrying as he passed Harold walking slowly along the road, but Harold did not seem to hear him. He was watching a gay little chipmunk who sat, chattering on a nearby stone wall.

"Wait a minute," called Harold to the

chipmunk. "I want to count your stripes."

"Cheep, cheep," called back the chipmunk, darting down after a little red apple that lay on the ground and then scampering with it up to a high branch of a tree. The chipmunk was trying with all his little might to tell Harold that he hadn't any time to wait. He had his living to get and he had to hurry about it.

Harold went slowly on until he came to a fat red robin hopping about in the grass.

"Wait a minute," called Harold to the robin. "I want to give you some crumbs of bread from my lunch basket."

"Cheer-up, cheer-up," sang the robin as she suddenly pulled a fat worm from the ground and flew off with it in her bill. The robin was telling Harold that she had her babies to feed and couldn't wait even for a feast for herself, until she had hurried to look after them.

And Harold went along a little farther until he came to a great white, feathery,

gone-to-seed dandelion standing stiffly by the side of the road.

"Wait a minute," called Harold to the dandelion. "I want to pick you and blow off your seeds and find out what time it is." But just then along came a puffing, busy little gust of wind and it lifted off every one of the dandelion's seeds and started them flying away for a long journey. The dandelion could not keep her seeds for Harold to play with. They had to hurry off and plant themselves that next year there might be a hundred times as many fluffy yellow dandelions as there were this year.

So Harold stood still and listened and looked and thought a minute. The vegetable man's cart rattled quickly by; the vegetable man was making haste to carry his pumpkins and squashes and potatoes to the market. A friendly little dog trotted by. She wagged her tail but she had no time for more than that. She had a litter of puppies in a barn nearby and was on her way to them. The miller's

boy hurried by with a bag of grain on his shoulders.

What was that? *Ting-a-ling-ling!* The last school bell was ringing.

Harold pulled his cap down tightly and ran as hard and as fast as he could. At the door of the school his teacher waited for him. She was waiting to say, "Hurry, Harold," but instead, she said, "Why, Harold, how quickly you came!"

"Yes," laughed Harold. "I shall hurry always now."

GRANDMOTHER'S SPECTACLES

One day, very early in the morning, grandmother lost her spectacles. They were not in her work-bag, or under the clock on the mantle-piece, or in the darning-basket, or in the chintz wall pocket, or in any of the usual places.

Bobby looked everywhere for the spectacles, and then he set about trying to help grandmother. Of course she could

not read the paper, so directly after breakfast Bobby sat down on the cricket by grandmother's armchair, and he spelled out all the big word headings in the paper for her, even if he could hear the boys whistling outside for him to come and play.

Then he threaded a great many needles for her, so they would be ready if she wanted them, and he stuck them neatly in her pin cushion. She could not see to arrange her room, so Bobby dusted the mahogany tables and all the chairs. He gathered up the scraps on the floor, playing that he was a wild beast hunter, which made it ever so much easier. First he would crouch down and aim his toy gun at a scrap. Then he would pounce upon it and put it in the waste basket. Some of the scraps he called tigers and some lions, but most of them were bears.

By the time grandmother's room was neat and tidy the sun was shining as bright as gold in the garden. Grandmother wanted to go out for a walk, but she could not see very well to go out

alone. Bobby said he would go with her, so he took her hand, and led her carefully up and down the paths, telling her:

"Oh, grandmother, dear! There's a double buttercup come up in the very place where it was last year. I was most afraid that it might forget, and come up single. There's a blue-bird's nest in the box on the gate-post. The mother-bird doesn't know that I saw her little ones, but when she is away, I just peek at them once or twice. There's such a wide blue sky. Can you see it without your spectacles, grandmother? It looks like the biggest blue bowl in the world."

Presently they went in for lunch, and then in another little while it was bed time, and Bobby sat in grandmother's lap begging for a story.

"Once upon a time," began grandmother, "there was a nice little boy. Some people called him Bobby, but that was not his real name. What do you suppose it was?"

"Buster," said Bobby promptly, because that was what his father called him.

"No," said grandmother. "Try again."

"Honey-bunch," said Bobby, because his aunts called him that.

"No," said grandmother.

"Little man, Robert, Precious, Junior." Bobby rattled off his names very fast.

"No," said grandmother. "I am afraid that I shall have to tell you, Bobby."

Then she whispered something in Bobby's ear, and it pleased him so that he laughed and laughed and laughed. This was his name: Grandmother's Spectacles.

THE CHILD WHO FORGOT TO WASH HIS FACE

The child forgot, very often, to wash his face. There were a number of children at his house, all younger than he, who had to have their faces washed for them, so the mother could not always attend to him. He had a fine little washcloth of his own that his grandmother

had knitted, but he often forgot to use it, which made his grandmother sad.

This special morning the child ate jam on his toast for breakfast. Oh, he was very untidy indeed, for there was jam on his blouse and on the tip of his nose and on his mouth when he finished breakfast! But he never remembered to use his wash-cloth and he jumped down from the table and ran outdoors to play.

Just outside the door, on a tree in the garden, hung the child's yellow canary in a pretty gilt cage. The bird was very tame. When the child whistled and put his finger in the cage, the yellow canary would light on it and sing. But this morning it paid not the slightest attention when the child called. The yellow canary was taking a bath. It had a white saucer full of crystal water, and it dipped its little body in and lifted up its head with the drops shining on its feathers like diamonds in a gold setting.

So the child went farther on, until he came to his pussy cat sitting in the path. She nearly always followed the child,

running after a string and ball which he carried in his pocket for her to play with. This morning, though, the pussy cat would not so much as look at the child. She was very busy indeed, washing the milk from her whiskers with one velvet paw and her little velvet tongue. She did not even purr when the child stroked her furry back.

So the child went still farther on until he came to the pond at the end of the garden where the ducks lived. His pockets were full of bits of bread for the ducks. He often tossed their breakfast out into the water, and the ducks swam to him and gobbled up the crumbs in their bills and quacked, "Thank you."

Today, though, the ducks did not seem to see their breakfast. At the other end of the pond they were dipping their green selves down in the water, until all the child could see was the tips of their pointed tails. Then they lifted themselves out of the water and shook a shower of drops from their green feathers. The ducks were taking their morning baths.

"I wonder why no one will play with me" thought the child.

Then he looked down in the mirror of the pond, and he saw that he had not washed his face.

"Why, perhaps it is because I am dirty," he said.

And the child ran home to use his grandmother's wash-cloth.

THE CAREFUL CHILD

The sun was up, and all the flowers in the garden were blooming. So the old brown beetle crawled slowly out from under the dock leaf which was his house, and looked about him.

"I believe I will take a long walk to-day," said the beetle to himself in particular, and the garden in general. "I think I shall go as far as the first dandelion plant."

The first dandelion plant grew just across the path from the dock leaf, but

that was a very long journey for the beetle. He was old, and his legs were very stiff. But he wanted to feel the sun shining down on his brown back. It had rained in the night, so the ground was wet and cold under the leaf where he lived. He wanted to see the blue sky, and stretch his wings and enjoy the fine weather.

So he crawled a few steps through the long, green grass.

"Don't go so far," warned a friendly spider, which was busily spinning lace under a clover leaf. "It is unsafe to cross the path. There is a child in the garden today. He will step on you."

But the old brown beetle, who was deaf as well as lame, kept right on his way.

"Don't travel so fast," said an ant, who was carrying grains of sand from the path to a new house she was building in the grasses. "The child is playing over yonder, and he will surely step on you."

But still the old brown beetle crawled slowly along.

"Don't, I beg of you, go any farther,"

said a measuring worm, which was humping its back and taking precise steps along the gravel. "Do you know, I only escaped being stepped on myself, just now. That child has such large feet, and very heavy shoes."

But the old brown beetle paid not the slightest attention to the measuring-worm and soon he came to the middle of the path. Then, very suddenly, the beetle saw two great, gray shadows in the path behind him. The shadows came nearer, and nearer, and then they turned into a pair of boy's shoes. Oh, how the poor little brown beetle shivered and shook! The child was coming and would certainly step on him. That was what all children did when they saw little crawling things. The brown beetle remembered his nice, sunny home under the dock leaf, and he thought how he never would see it again after he was stepped on.

But the child did not step on the old brown beetle. He looked down on the ground and saw him, and he knew that

even a beetle loves to be alive. He just went by on the other side of the path, because he was such a kind, careful child.

THE COOKIES

Chubby was very fond indeed of cookies, and he always ate a great many. He ate one for lunch at school and two for lunch at home, and one or two for an afternoon tea-party and several more to help him finish his glass of milk at supper time, and every single person in the house had a special sort of cookie which she always made for Chubby and which Chubby especially liked.

There were the big ginger cookies that Chubby's grandmother made; there were the caraway cookies that old Dinah, the cook, made. There were the animal cookies cut in the shape of cats and chickens and roosters, that mother made, and there were the heart cookies that big sister made, all covered with white icing.

It was one Monday morning that all the strange things happened to Chubby. Chubby had on his clean blue linen suit and his big straw hat and he was all cleaned and brushed for school. Grandmother had given him two ginger cookies, round and fat and spicy, neatly wrapped in a white napkin for his lunch. When it came lunch time Chubby went out with the other children into the school yard.

He sat down in a corner and unwrapped the cookies. Then he saw a little boy looking at him, a little boy in a ragged coat who sat in the back seat at school, but who always smiled all over his freckled, round face.

Chubby looked at the cookies, then he looked at the boy.

"Have a cookie?" he asked.

The little boy took the cookie and ate it to the very last crumb.

"Would you like another cookie?" Chubby asked politely. The little boy took the last cookie and ate that, too.

"Thank you," he said. "I didn't have any breakfast."

That was the first strange thing that happened to Chubby.

When he went home from school there was Arabella, his cousin, come to have lunch with him. Mother had laid luncheon for them at a little round table; sandwiches, cocoa, and a plate of animal cookies. As soon as Arabella and Chubby sat down, Arabella spied the cookies.

"Oh, Chubby!" she cried, pulling the plate right up in front of her. "You don't know how I do love cookies. You eat the sandwiches."

"All right," Chubby said. And he ate bread-and-butter sandwiches as Arabella ate all of the cookies.

That was the second strange thing that happened to Chubby.

After luncheon, when Arabella had gone home, Chubby decided to go out in the garden to play, but first he went to the pantry and found just one pink caraway cookie left in the jar. As he walked

down the garden path with the cookie in his hand he met the old red rooster.

"Cock-a-doodle-doo!" said the red rooster, hurrying up to Chubby, and biting off half of the caraway cookie.

"All right," said Chubby, "take it all," and he gave the last caraway cookie to the red rooster.

After awhile it was supper time. Chubby sat in the nursery window-seat with his supper tray in his lap. There was a big bowl of bread and milk and just one frosted heart cookie that big sister had put there for him. Now Chubby was going to have his cookie.

First he ate all his bread and milk. Just as he finished that Chubby felt a soft scratch, scratch at his foot. It was Towser, Chubby's little white dog. Chubby nearly always shared his supper with Towser. There wasn't a single bit of supper left, though, except just the cookie. Chubby looked at it and then he looked at Towser's big, pleading brown eyes.

"All right, Towser. Speak for it, sir,"

he said, and as Towser stood on his back legs and begged, Chubby tossed the frosted heart cookie right into Towser's pink mouth. That was the fourth thing that happened to Chubby.

Then it was bed time and Chubby's mother came upstairs to kiss him good-night. As he waited for her, the last strange thing happened. He suddenly felt as full as if he had eaten ginger cookies and animal cookies and caraway cookies and heart cookies. He felt as jolly as if he had been to a circus and a picnic and a Wild West Show and a straw ride. He felt as happy as if he had been to a party where there was ice cream and candy.

"Why, Chubby dear, you look so happy tonight!" said his mother. "What have you been doing today?"

"I gave away all my cookies," said Chubby.

THE PATCH-WORK QUILT

When Priscilla went to visit her grandmother dear, she found many delights. There was the old Tabby, so large and beautiful, who basked all day in the sunny garden and purred loudly whenever Priscilla smoothed and patted her. There was Dandy, the big brown dog, who was as fine as a pony because he let little Priscilla ride all over the farm on his broad shaggy back. There were flowers to pick and smooth, white eggs to gather in a little round basket. There were hay mows among which one could play hide-and-seek. There were grandmother dear's once-upon-a-time stories that Priscilla so loved to hear at bed time. But, oh, there was grandmother dear's patch-work sewing which play-loving little Priscilla did not like.

Almost as soon as Priscilla came to her grandmother dear's big white farm house that stood in the beautiful green country, she saw on the four-poster bed in the

spare room a funny, queer quilt. It was made up of many diamond-shaped pieces of red and white and yellow and green and blue and spotted and striped cloth, sewed together to make stars.

"I sewed all those diamond-shaped pieces of cloth together to make that star patch-work quilt when I was a little girl," Priscilla's grandmother explained. "Every little girl should make a patch-work quilt. I will show you how to begin one tomorrow."

"I would rather not make a patch-work quilt, grandmother dear," Priscilla said very sweetly but very firmly. "I don't like to sew because my needle always sticks and my thread knots."

"Oh, that is too bad," said Priscilla's grandmother, but that is all she said about it.

One day when it rained and the garden was too wet to play in, Priscilla said to her grandmother dear, "What shall I do?"

"You may look at the pretty pieces in my piece-bag and all the beautiful things

in my work-basket," smiled grandmother dear.

Oh, the beautiful, interesting things in the work-basket! There were shining needles and a pair of scissors with carved ivory handles and a pin cushion made like a crimson tomato and a pin ball made like a yellow sunflower and an emery made like a little red strawberry.

Oh, the pretty, interesting pieces of cloth in the piece-bag! Priscilla's grandmother held up two pieces: one was a scrap of green cloth and one was a scrap of white cloth that had a pattern of tiny pink rosebuds.

"Once upon a time when I was a little girl," she began, "I had a new dress like this—white with a pattern of pink roses —and I had a little scalloped coat of green linen like this. I wore them to school the day I spoke a piece."

As Priscilla's grandmother told the story she cut a diamond-shaped piece of the white cloth with roses and a diamond-shaped piece of the green cloth. She folded the edges of each neatly and she

threaded a shining needle with a straight white thread.

"May I sew together the pieces of your little rosebud dress and your little green coat?" Priscilla asked.

"Yes indeed," her grandmother smiled back, "and if your needle sticks you may clean it in my little red strawberry emery. If your thread knots I will help you to straighten it."

So Priscilla sewed together the two diamond-shaped pieces of cloth and when she had finished, she asked her grandmother to cut two more pieces and then more. She sewed them all together neatly and it made a little green and white star and then she made a white star to sew on one side of it and then another white star to sew on the other side of it.

"I never had such a happy rainy day, grandmother dear," exclaimed Priscilla when it was time to stop for a party feast of milk and caraway cookies.

Many other days Priscilla begged to have grandmother dear bring out her work-basket and her piece-bag. Her

grandmother showed her scraps of the yellow and white striped cambric dress that she had worn, once, to a party. All of these pretty pieces of cloth Priscilla sewed together, in diamond shape, to make stars, and she made many white stars too.

Then it was the day when Priscilla must go home to the city. Grandmother dear packed a little round basket of lunch for her to eat on the train: a red apple, a white egg, two white chicken sandwiches and a fat slice of gold cake. Then she said, "Shut your eyes, dear!" and she put a surprise into Priscilla's hands.

Priscilla opened her eyes. She held a beautiful patch-work quilt for a doll. It was made of green-patched stars and pink and white and yellow. It was Priscilla's own work.

"You made it yourself," Priscilla's grandmother said.

"And it was such fun," Priscilla said as she hugged and kissed grandmother dear. "I *like* to sew," she finished happily.

THE MAY PARTY

All the children in the Sunday-School primary department were going to the May party. The minister would be there and the teacher who knew how to tell beautiful stories and start merry games. There would be baskets of chicken sandwiches and hard-boiled eggs and chocolate cake and a freezer of ice cream and a can of lemonade. The children, dressed in their best white things, would walk to the green woods and when they reached there—oh, how wonderful—a child would be chosen to be the May queen. That was the secret about the May party. Not a single child knew who would be chosen to sit on a make-believe throne out in the woods, and wear garlands of flowers and choose the games and be the queen.

"I shall be chosen," thought the shopkeeper's little daughter, as she put on her white dress with ruffles and pulled out her ribbons. "Of course they will ask me to

be the May queen because my father is rich."

"I shall be chosen," said the pretty little girl, tying her yellow curls with a blue ribbon. "They will want me of course, because I look like a queen."

"No, I shall be chosen," said the mayor's little girl, rustling her stiff silk sash. "They will have to choose me for the May queen because my father is so important."

So all the children argued and wondered, but no one really knew who would be the May queen, and it came to be the warm, golden day of the May party.

The May procession started out gaily. The minister, as merry as a big boy, walked in front and the Sunday-School teachers helped the very little ones near the end. A wagon trimmed with pink and green bunting carried the sandwiches and cake and ice cream and lemonade. Everyone sang and everyone was happy —all except Rose, the sexton's little girl.

Rose had little brother Teddy and baby Mary with her. Teddy's legs were so short that he couldn't keep up with the

others very well unless Rose pulled him, and baby Mary had to be carried all the way. Rose wore no white dress, because her mother had been too busy to wash and iron one. She wore a blue gingham, and several of the children pointed their fingers at her and laughed. Two hot tears squeezed themselves out of Rose's eyes, but she struggled bravely on with the two little ones and helped when she could with the other little ones. She was tired and dusty, but little brother Teddy and baby Mary were happy and clean when they reached the woods.

None of the older children wanted to play with Rose because she had on her every-day dress, but Rose kept very busy. She gathered the little ones around her and they played tea-party with leaves for plates and twigs for knives and forks. Then she helped the teacher put the wooden plates and the cups and the paper napkins on the picnic table and when the children were seated she passed the sandwiches and the pieces of chocolate cake,

and she did not eat a crumb until everyone else was served.

Afterward came the wonderful time for choosing the May Queen. All the children picked leaves and made them into bunches to decorate the big, moss-grown, old tree stump which was to be the throne. From a corner of the wagon they drew many long garlands of pretty paper flowers that the dear teacher had made, and these they twined about the stump until it blossomed like a fairy bower. As the throne grew more and more beautiful, the children crowded closer to see the little queen step up to her place, and they pushed so hard that Rose could not see at all. She stood at the very back of them all holding baby Mary up that *she* might see.

Then the minister stepped up beside the throne and spoke to the children.

"When I was a little boy," he began, "and lived in England, we always had a May party like this every spring. We chose a May queen, too, and this is how we did it. The children chose her, not

the grown-ups." He stopped a minute and the children were very quiet, thinking over what he had said. Then he went on:

"We used to say this old rhyme first to help the children to choose the May queen:

"'Who shall be queen of the May?
Not the prettiest one, not the wittiest one,
Nor she with the gown most gay,
But she who is pleasantest all the day through,
With the pleasantest things to say and do,
She shall be Queen of the May.'"

As the minister finished and did not say another word but only waited again, a strange thing happened. The crowd of children parted to make room and some of the children pushed Rose and some took her hands and pulled her until she reached the throne on the tree stump. There they placed her and twined garlands of flowers about her until her everyday dress was quite covered. And Rose's eyes shone like stars, she was so happy.

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